

فضائل صدقات

FAZA'IL

-E-

SADAQAAT

By  
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# فضائل صدقات

## *FAZA'IL-E-SADAQAAT*

PART ONE

English Translation of Urdu Book



by

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ - حَامِدًا وَمُصَلِّيًا وَسَلَامًا -

## PREFACE

With the highest praise to Allah *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala* and with Darood and Salaam to Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, these few pages are being presented to our readers to bring out the virtues of Sadaqaat (spending for the cause of Allah). As mentioned in the preface to my booklet on *Fazail-e-Hajj*, my late uncle Maulana Muhammad Ilyas *Rahmatullah alaihe* was deeply interested in the publication of a book on this subject and, in the last days of his life, he repeatedly urged me to write one. So much so that, once while standing for Asr Salaat when 'Takbeer' was being called, he leaned forward from the row and said to this humble author, "Do not forget that book". In those days of his illness, Maulana did not lead Salaat; he joined the Jama'at.

Despite all that urgency and insistence from him, the delay on my part continued, resulting in repeated postponements. Fortunately, in Shawwal 1366 A.H. my stay in Nizamuddin was prolonged, as mentioned in the preface to *Fazail-e-Hajj*; and there seemed no likelihood of my return to Saharanpur even after the completion of that book. So, at long last, a start on this book was made on Saturday, the 24th of Shawwal, 1366 A.H. May Allah *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala* help me to accomplish this work, by showering His bounties and blessings upon me, which have always been bestowed upon me both in worldly and religious matters, in growing profusion, despite my own incapability! May Allah bring it to a completion acceptable to Him!

وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ط

"And I seek aid from none except Allah; in Him I trust and to Him alone, I turn for help".

I intend to divide this book into seven Chapters, viz:-

1. Virtues and rewards of spending for the cause of Allah.
2. Condemnation of miserliness.
3. Being particular about obligations towards one's relations.
4. Zakaat as an obligation.
5. Punishments for failure to pay Zakaat.
6. Virtues of asceticism, contentment and avoidance of begging.
7. Stories of pious personages who spent generously for the cause of Allah *Ta'ala*.

Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhalvi.



## FAZA'IL-E-SADAQAAT

### INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO THE TRANSLATION

Some important points regarding the format of this translation may be noted. In the first place, the phrases, "*Sallallahu alaihe Wasallam*" "*Radiallahu anho*, "*Rahmatullah alaihe*, " etc., have been printed in italics and given repeatedly, partly to earn reward for the readers and partly to educate them in their proper use.

2. Secondly, with regard to the translations of the Quranic Ayaat and the Ahadith, it is the beauty and Barakah of the Qur'an that their Arabic is so amenable to translation and is accessible to readers in their own language. The Holy Qur'an has been translated into many languages, but it is not always easy to convey the precise spirit of the original, especially in a "word-for-word" translation. Many standard translations of the Qur'an by various scholars exist in English, whose authors have done their best to translate as faithfully as was possible for them, yet it is never the last word. In this book, the translation adopted is the classical one of Mohammad Marmaduke Picthall, with very occasional modification.

3. The translations of the particular leading Quranic Ayaat and Ahadith, forming the main theme of an individual article or sub-section of the book, have been given in Bold Face beneath the original Arabic text, which serves to clear any ambiguity that may remain in the reader's mind after reading the translation. The translations of supporting Ayaat that occur in the course of the text and the explanatory examples introduced by the author (M.M. Zakariyyah *Rahmatullah alaihe* are given in italics, so as to differentiate these from the main theme given at the beginning of each article/sub-section.

4. As no standard English translation of the Ahadith is readily available, an attempt has been made to bring out their meanings through a relatively free (rather than "word-for-word") translation. Any remaining ambiguities may please be communicated to the publishers, for correction or improvement in future.

5. Certain Arabic words will be found transliterated into the English text, in order to introduce certain basic Islamic terms and concepts into the English language, which does not really possess exact equivalents for these. In many cases, the approximate English translation is also given alongside. Hopefully, this may help to fix the ideas better in the minds of the English-speaking readers, to whom this book is addressed. In the Transliteration, the Arabic letter (ع) is indicated by (') and the vowel (ـ) by (').



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## SECTION (c)

### AYAAT ON TAWAKKUL AND DEPRECATION OF BEGGING

On the subject of 'Tawakkul, many more Traditions have been given in the following pages, under Hadith one in the series of Ahadith on the foregoing subject. At this point, as usual, it is proposed to quote a few Verses from the Holy Qur'an, in which Allah Ta'ala exhorts His servants to put trust in Him and to turn to Him alone in all their needs. I have given only a few Verses, which typify many others of the same import. And, for the sake of brevity, I have omitted details and supplied suggestive hints (within parenthesis) in the translation of the text.

These Verses and Ahadith deserve our serious consideration and are worthy of concern for everyone who has any regard for Deen and about his future life, provided he can leave alone his idle worldly pursuits for a short while, to give thought to such important matters.

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلِ كُلُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١﴾

1. And in Allah alone should the Faithful (ever) put their trust. (*Ale-Imran: 122*)

The Ayat implies that the Mo'mineen should not at all put their trust in anyone other than Allah Ta'ala. There are frequent references to the subject in the Holy Qur'an and the same half Ayat has been repeated at various places e.g. in the Ayaat at *Ale-Imran: 160*, *al-Ma'idah: 11*, *al-Taubah: 51*, *Ibrahim: 11*, *Al-Mujadilah: 10*, *at-Taghabun: 13*, which refer to the same theme.

﴿٢﴾ قُلْ إِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١﴾ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢﴾

2. Say: (O Muhammad) 'All bounties (which include one's daily sustenance) are in the Hand of Allah. He grants them to whom He pleaseth. And Allah is All-Embracing (His bounties are unbounded), All-knowing. (He knows how much should be granted to

whom and at what time). And for the grant of His Mercy (and bounty), He (specially) chooseth whom He pleaseth. (For) Allah is the Lord of infinite bounties. (Aale'Imran: 73-74)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

(۳)

3. Verily Allah loves those who put (all) their trust (in Allah). (Aale-Imraan-59)

*Note:* How exalted is he who becomes the loved one of Allah Ta'ala Himself!

(These Ayaat refer to a particular incident that took place during the times of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) Allah Ta'ala says:

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ۝ فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَمْ يَمْسَسْهُمْ سُوءٌ وَاتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝ إِنَّمَا ذَلِكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُوا مِنِّي إِن كُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

4. Those unto whom men said, Lol The people (your enemies) have gathered (arms, etc., to fight) against you: therefore, fear them. But the news (threat of war only) increased their Faith and they said, 'Allah is Sufficient for us' (Allah will suffice us as a Protector against all dangers). He is the best disposer of affairs. So they returned (from the expedition) with grace and bounty from Allah; no harm ever touched them. For, they followed the pleasure of Allah! And Allah is the Lord of infinite bounties. It is Shaitan who would make (men) fear his partisans. Be you not afraid of them, but fear Me, if you are true believers. (Aale'Imran: 173-175)

The Ayaat warn the believers that, in all such circumstances, when they hear the news of an impending attack by the enemy, they should not feel terrified. Instead, they should prepare for the enemy as best they can, keeping full trust in Allah Ta'ala and counting on His succour. Their only concern should be to guard themselves against such deeds as incur the displeasure of Allah Ta'ala; that



alone can bring about their utter ruin in this world and eternal damnation (for sure) in the Akhirah. The believers should entertain no other fears. For, the worst harm that people threaten to do a person is to take his life, but death is preordained and it must come to everybody at its appointed time, which can neither be hastened nor put off.

وَكُفَىٰ بِاللهِ وَلِيًّا ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللهِ نَصِيرًا ۝

(5)

5. And Allah is sufficient as a Protector and Allah is sufficient as a Helper. (*an-Nisa: 45*)

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللهِ وَكِيلًا ۝

(6)

6. And put thy trust in Allah; and Allah is sufficient as Trustee. (*an-Nisaa: 81*)

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۝

(7)

7. So, in Allah put your trust, if you are indeed believers (Mo'mineen). (*al-Maidah: 23*)

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أُتَجِدُ وَلِيًّا فَأَطِرُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ يُطْعِمُهُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ ۚ

(8)

8. Say (O. Muhammad), shall I take for my protector anyone other than Allah, the Originator of heavens and the earth? And He, it is that, feedeth but is not fed (because He does not stand in need of being fed). (*al-An'aam: 14*)

وَإِنْ يَسَّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ بِمُخِرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

(9)

9. If Allah touch thee with affliction, there is none that can relieve thee from it except He. And if He touch thee with good fortune (there is none that can prevent Him from doing so), for He hath Power over all things. (*al-An'aam: 17*)

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهََ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

(10)

10. Whoso puts his trust in Allah (is often triumphant because), verily Allah is Almighty, Wise. (*al-Anfaal: 49*)

## CH. VI: AYAAT ON TAWAKKUL AND DEPRECATION OF BEGGING

**Note:** And He exalts those who trust Him (above others). Sometimes, however, such people are not granted immediate success because the Divine Wisdom has ordained it so, for their ultimate benefit. Remember, in all His actions, He is Wise.

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١١﴾

11. And trust in Allah! For, He is the one that heareth and knoweth. (He listens to the invocations of His men and knows, better than anyone else, their circumstances). (*al-Anfal: 61*)

وَإِذَا مَسَّ الْإِنْسَانَ الضُّرُّ دَعَانَا بِجُثْمِهِ أَوْ قَاعِدًا أَوْ قَائِمًا فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُ غُصَّتَهُ مَرَّكَانَ لَمْ يَذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ غَيْرِنَا وَلَمْ يَذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ غَيْرِنَا ﴿١٢﴾

12. When an affliction toucheth a man, he crieth unto Us (in all postures) while reclining on his bed, on his side or sitting or standing. But when We have relieved him of the trouble (out of Mercy over his weeping and crying), he passeth on his way (in proud unconcern) as if he had never cried unto Us for (relieving) a trouble that touched him. (This is height of folly). (*Yunus: 12*)

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَهَنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

13. Say (unto them, O Muhammad), Who is it that grants you your sustenance from the sky and from the earth? Or, Who is it that has power over hearing and sight? And Who is it that brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? And, Who is it that rules all things? They will (definitely) say: 'Allah'. Then say: 'Will you not then fear Him and keep your duty unto Him? (why do you, then, feel afraid of any other being). (*Yunus: 31*)

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَقَوْمِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَهْتَابُونَ فَلْيَقُولُوا لِلَّهِ عَدُوًّا مُّخْتَارًا ﴿١٤﴾

14. And Musaa said (to his people): 'O my people! If you do (sincerely) believe in Allah, then in Him put your



trust, if you have indeed surrendered to Him. They said (in reply), 'In Allah we put our trust'. (Yunus: 84-85)

(١٥) وَإِنْ يَمَسَّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يُرِيدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝

15. If Allah afflicts you with some hurt, there is none can remove it but He. If He desires some good for thee, there is none can keep back His favour. He causeth it to reach whomsoever of His servants He pleaseth. And He is the oft-Forgiving. Most Merciful. (Yunus: 107)

(١٦) وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

16. There is no creature (beast) on earth but its sustenance dependeth on Allah. (So, everybody should ask for his sustenance from Him alone). (Hood: 6)

(١٧) قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابِ

17. Say (O Muhammad), He is my Lord (my Sustainer). There is no God but He! In Him do I put my trust and unto Him is my recourse. (ar-Ra'd: 30)

(١٨) الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝

18. They (whose good qualities have been recounted in the preceding Verses) are those who persevere patiently (in afflictions) and put their trust in their Lord. (They do not feel worried as to the sources from where they will get their daily provisions of food, etc., after they have made Hijrah). (an-Nahl: 42)

(١٩) إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝

19. No power has he (the Devil or Shaitaan) over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord (provided that, in their trust and belief in Allah, they are true to the core). (an-Nahl: 99)

(٢٠) وَآتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ إِلَّا تَجِدُ كَافِرِينَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَٰلِكَ

20. And We gave Musaa the Book (the Torah), and made it a (source of) guidance to the children of Israel, saying 'Take none other than Me as your Guardian'. (Bani Israel: 2)

﴿٢١﴾ وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَنْ تَدْعُونَ إِلَّا إِلَٰهَ فَلَمَّا بَلَغْتُمُ الْمَلَاقِي الْأَوَّلَ اعْرَظْهُمْ وَكَلَّ الْإِنْسَانُ كَفُورًا ﴿٢١﴾

21. And when distress (tempests, etc.) touches you on the sea, all unto whom you cry (for succour), besides Himself, fail you. But when He brings you safe to land, you turn away (from Him). True, man has ever been ungrateful. (Bani Israel: 67)

﴿٢٢﴾ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ ذَلَّ إِلَهُكُمْ فِي حُكْمِهِ أَعْدَاءُ ﴿٢٢﴾

22. They have no protecting friend other than Him: nor does He share His command with any person (or group of persons) whatsoever. (al-kahf: 26)

﴿٢٣﴾ يَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ ذَلَّ السَّيْلُ الْبُعِيدُ ﴿٢٣﴾

23. He calls on such deities (worships them) besides Allah, as can neither hurt nor profit him; that is straying far indeed (from the Right Path). (al-Hajj: 12)

﴿٢٤﴾ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ ﴿٢٤﴾

24. And put thy trust in the living One (Allah) Who dieth not. (al-Furqaan: 58)

﴿٢٥﴾ وَالَّذِي يُرِيظُونَنِي وَيُفْقِنُنِي وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِي ﴿٢٥﴾

25. And Who gives me food and drink; And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me. (ash-Shura: 79-80)

﴿٢٦﴾ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْعَزِيزِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢٦﴾

26. And put your trust in Him Who is Exalted in Might (Allah), the Merciful. (ash-Shura: 217)

﴿٢٧﴾ فَابْتَغُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْيُسْرَىٰ وَأَعْبُدُوهُ وَأَشْكُرُوا لَهُ ۖ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

27. Then seek thy sustenance from Allah (as He is the sole sustainer for all), worship Him and be grateful to Him. To Him will be your return (on the Day of Resurrection). (*al-Ankabut: 17*)

رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ

(۲۸)

28. And how many an animal there is that carries not its own sustenance. It is Allah Who feeds (both) them and you. (And He alone is worthy of trust). For, He hears and knows (all things). (*al-Ankabut: 60*)

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا

(۲۹)

29. And put your trust in Allah; enough is Allah as a Trustee. (*al-Ahzab: 3*)

۳۰ قُلْ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَعْصِيكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ رَحْمَةً لَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا

30. Say (O Muhammad), who is he who can preserve you from Allah if it be His wish to give you punishment (harm or loss of any type); or (who can prevent Him) if He intends to grant you Mercy (If all the people were to unite to prevent Him, they could not do so). Remember, they will never find for themselves, besides Allah, any protector or helper. (*al-Ahzab: 17*)

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدًا

(۳۱)

31. Is not Allah sufficient (as Defender) for His servant? (*az-Zumar: 36*)

۳۲ قُلْ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِيَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ كَاشِفَاتُ ضُرِّيٍّ أَوْ أَرَادَنِيَ بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكَاتُ رَحْمَتِهِ قُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ

32. Say (O Muhammad): "See you then? The things that you invoke (worship) besides Allah, can they, if Allah wills some hurt for me, remove His hurt? or, if He wills some grace (bounty) for me, can they restrain His grace?" Say: "Sufficient is Allah, for me!



In Him do trust (all), those who put their trust. (az-Zumar: 38)

ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ رَبِّيَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ۝

(۳۳)

33. Such is Allah, my Lord; in Him do I trust and to Him do I turn (for help in all my needs). (ash-Shura: 10)

اللَّهُ لَطِيفٌ بِعِبَادِهِ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْقَوِيُّ الْعَزِيزُ ۝

(۳۴)

34. Gracious is Allah to His bondsmen; He gives sustenance to whom He pleases (and as much as He pleases) and He is the Powerful the Mighty. (ash-Shura: 19)

وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ۝

(۳۵)

35. Nor have you, besides Allah, anyone to protect or to help. (ash-Shura: 31)

وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ۝

(۳۶)

36. But that which is with Allah is far better and more lasting for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. (ash-Shura: 36)

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ بِذِكْرِهِ مَا تُوعَدُونَ ۝

(۳۷)

37. And in heaven is your sustenance, as (also) that which you are promised (that is to say your sustenance is pre-destined and recorded in the Lauhe-Mahfooz). (Az-Zariyat: 22)

رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ۝

(۳۸)

38. (So prayed Ibrahim): Our Lord, in Thee do we trust and to Thee do we turn (for help in all our needs); to Thee is our final goal (on the Day of Resurrection). (al-Mamtahanah: 4)

۝۳۹ مُمِرُّ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ لَا تُنْفِقُوا عَلَىٰ مَنْ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ حَتَّىٰ يَنْفَضُوا وَيُخْرِجُوا مِنَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ۝

39. They are the ones (the hypocrites or 'Munafiqeen') who say, spend nothing on those who are with

Allah's Rasul so that (for fear of starvation) they may disperse. (The fact is that the hypocrites have no sense. Don't they know that) to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth; but the hypocrites understand not. (They foolishly think that the sustenance of the believers depend upon what they give them in Sadaqah). (*al-Manafiqun: 7*)

﴿٢٠﴾ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مِزْزًا ۝

40. And for those who fear Allah, He (ever) prepares a way (out of danger to safety; out of difficulty to ease and comfort). And He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine. And if anyone puts his trust in Allah, Sufficient is Allah for him. For, Allah will surely accomplish His purpose. Verily, for all things, has Allah set a measure. (*at-Talaq 2 - 3*)

*Note:* The Verses allude to an incident related in the following pages under Hadith one of the series of Ahadith (on "Tawakkul").

﴿٢١﴾ رَبُّ الشَّرْقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ۝

41. He is the Lord of the East and the West; There is no one to be worshipped but He. Take Him alone, therefore, as your Defender and Trustee. (*al-Muzammil: 9*)

The forty-one Ayaat quoted above should serve as a sample of many others with similar meanings. As a matter of fact, (in a vaster sense) the entire subject-matter of the Holy Qur'an comprises exhortations to cultivate a firm belief in the Oneness of Allah Ta'ala (Tauheed). And, as 'Tawakkul' is the essence of 'Tauheed', the more firmly grounded anybody is in his belief in 'Tauheed' the more advanced will he be in 'Tawakkul' and the more averse to seeking the help of anyone other than Allah Ta'ala (in hours of need). It is well-known that when Ibrahim Alaihissalaam the friend of Allah, was going to be put into the fire, Jibrael Alaihissalaam came and implored him thus: "I am at your service and ready to do your bidding if there is aught I can do for you". Ibrahim Alaihissalaam replied, "No, I don't need your help in any matter". (*Ihya-ul-Uloom*)

It is said that once a Dervish went into a Masjid and sat there with the intention of observing 'I'tikaaf'. He had no provision of food or drink with him. The Imaam of the Masjid advised him that as a destitute person, it was better for him not to observe I'tikaaf; he should rather do some job to earn his daily bread. The Dervish made no reply; the Imaam again insisted that he should go and earn his living, but he remained silent. After the Imaam had repeatedly asked him to do so for the third and the fourth time, the Dervish said, "Beside the Masjid, there is a shop owned by a Jew, Who has promised to send me two loaves of bread everyday". The Imaam said, "If he has promised to provide you food, it is well and good. Then you may observe 'I'tikaaf'. The Dervish reprimandingly said, "It would be far better if you did not lead the prayers; with such a weak faith in 'Tauheed', how can you dare to lead the prayers? You have great reliance on the promise made by an unbelieving Jew but you put little trust in the promise made by Allah Ta'ala to provide sustenance (to all living things). (*Raudh*)

The Ayaat quoted above deserve our serious consideration. We should try our utmost to keep in mind only Allah Ta'ala, at all times, expecting His favours. We should have absolute confidence in Him and ask Him alone for help in all our needs. We should beg Him alone and should, in no circumstances, ask any person for anything. Rather we should not even think, in our minds, of asking for anything from anyone other than Allah Ta'ala. We should make Him---and Him alone---our sole resort for seeking help in hours of need, believing from the core of our heart that Allah Ta'ala alone can do us good or harm. We often talk in such words about our faith and trust in Allah Ta'ala, but what is really needed is a firm belief that neither kings nor the rich can do us any harm or grant us any favour, unless Allah Ta'ala wills it so.

We may remind ourselves about this obvious fact that the hearts of all men all over the world are controlled by Allah Ta'ala. However humbly we entreat someone, he will not be moved (because his heart is not in his own control) unless He, in whose Hands the hearts of all men are, wills it so. If, on the other hand, Allah Ta'ala, who reigns over the hearts of all men, decrees it to happen, He will inspire the hearts of men to accept what we say. And whatever disregard we may show to a person, he will be obliged to listen to us, because of the promptings from within. So, it is Allah Ta'ala alone whose help should be sought in the hour of need. And it is His Court

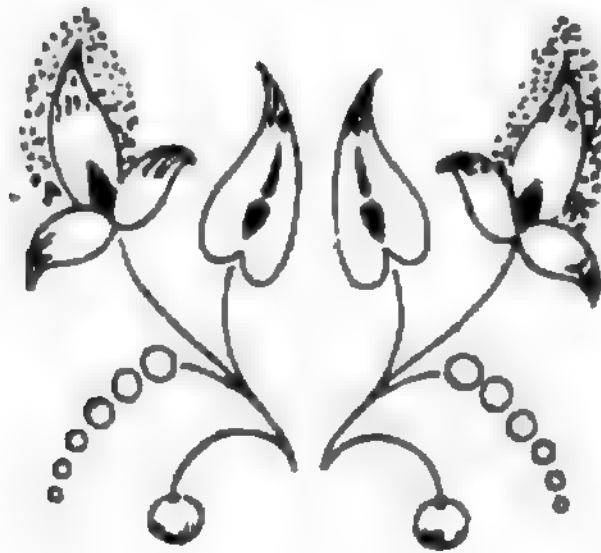


alone where we should ever bow in humility and submit our entreaties. His will reigns supreme over the hearts of all men, all over the world. He is the Sovereign Lord of all the treasures of the world. O, Allah! grant me, by virtue of your Infinite Bounties and without my deserving it, something of this essential (the invaluable) quality of Tawakkul. For, your favours are bestowed both upon those who deserve and upon those who are unworthy of your bounty. An Urdu poet says:

خدا کی دین کا موسیٰ سے پوچھئے احوال  
کہ آگ لینے کو جاتین ہمیری مل جائے

*"Go and ask Musaa Alaihissalaam how bountiful the rewards are of Allah Ta'ala. For he went to fetch fire, but lo! There (on the Mount) he was granted 'Nabuwwat' from Allah Ta'ala."*

Here, I would like to quote a few Ahadith (with brief explanatory notes) on the subjects contained in the foregoing Ayaat.



## SECTION (d)

AHADITH ON THE FOREGOING SUBJECTS  
(CONCERNING THE EXCELLENCE OF TAWAKKUL)

① عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ تَزَلَّتْ بِهِ فَاقَةٌ فَاتَزَّلَهَا بِالنَّاسِ لَمْ تُسَدَّ فَاقَتُهُ وَمَنْ تَزَلَّتْ بِهِ فَاقَةٌ فَاتَزَّلَهَا بِاللَّهِ قَبِلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ يَرْزُقُهُ عَاجِلًا أَوْ آجِلًا. (رواه الترمذى وفهكذا فى الدر المنثور برواية ابى داؤد والترمذى والحاكم وقد صححه ولفظ ابى داؤد بموت عاجل او غنى عاجل وفى المشكوة بموت عاجل او غنى عاجل)

## HADITH: 1

**Ibne Mas'ud Radhiallaho anho relates that Rasulallah Sallallah alaihe wasallam said, 'If one who suffers from starvation approaches other men, his suffering will not come to an end; but if he approaches Allah Ta'ala (and beseeches His favour), He will provide livelihood for him sooner or later.**

**Note:** The sentence, 'If one who suffers from starvation approaches other men, his suffering will not come to an end, means that he will ever remain needy. If, through begging from people, one of his needs gets fulfilled and the state of neediness appears to have vanished for the time being, he will soon find himself facing another need, even more urgent than the one he faced before, and will be obliged to beg from people again, thus continuing in a state of neediness. On the other hand, if he places his need before Allah Ta'ala, He will definitely fulfil his present need without letting other needs arise, and also provide against the needs which might arise in future.

Under Hadith Eight in Chapter One, Part One of this book, we have already quoted a Hadith related by Abu Kabshah Radhiallaho anho to the effect that he heard Rasulallah Sallallah alaihe wasallam saying, "There are three things which I swear to be true". Among these, he mentioned, 'When a man opens a door for begging Allah Ta'ala opens for him a door to want and poverty.' In the same

context, we have also quoted another Hadith on the authority of Abdur Rahman Ibne'Auf *Radhiallahoh anho*. That is why we see that those who beg from door to door always remain needy and destitute. In another Hadith, it has been related that: 'If one who suffers from starvation and poverty, approaches Allah *Ta'ala*, He will soon grant him relief either by an early death or by timely provision.'

'Early death' has been interpreted as meaning the death of the afflicted person himself, who is granted death as a relief. According to another interpretation, early death means the death of someone else which becomes an occasion for the grant of provisions for the starving man who, for example, inherits a large fortune or receives a handsome legacy from the property of the deceased person. We have seen and heard about many such cases in which a person dying in Makkah left a will to the effect that all his property should be sold and the amount remitted to such and such a person living in India.

There was once a notorious robber among the Kurds (the name of a tribe in the Middle East). He narrates his own story: Once I was going with my gang of robbers with the intention of a dacoity. We stopped to take rest at a place where we saw three date-palms, of which two were laden with fruit but the third was dry and barren. Time and again, a sparrow came to one of the green trees, took some fresh dates in its beak and flew across to the dry palm. We were greatly surprised. After I had counted ten trips of the bird, it occurred to me that I should climb the tree and see what it was doing with the dates.

I climbed up to the top of the palm and saw a blind snake lying there with its mouth wide open: the sparrow had been putting fresh dates into the mouth of this blind snake! The sight (of a sparrow feeding a blind snake) awakened my conscience and I was moved to tears. I cried unto Allah *Ta'ala*, 'O Allah! When this snake, which Your Rasul *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* has commanded us to kill, became blind, you appointed a sparrow to provide sustenance for it. And I, who am Your slave and believer in 'Tauheed', have been destined to loot the people. At this, I heard a voice speaking to me, from within my heart, thus: 'The door towards repentance is open to every body, at all times.' Instantly I broke the sword with which I used to rob the people and (in the frenzy of remorse), began to throw dust on my head. I wept and cried unto Allah, 'Forgive me, O Lord!' A Voice from the Unseen whispered in my heart, 'We have forgiven



you! We have forgiven you!" After a short while, I rejoined my companions. They wanted to know what had happened to me. I said, 'I was led astray and was estranged from My Lord. Now I have made peace with Him'. And I told them the whole story. They said, 'We also will make peace with our Lord', and they broke their swords, too. We abandoned all our looted property there, put on 'Thraam' (the white garb of a pilgrim) and set out to Makkah for Hajj. After travelling for three days, we reached a village where we came across a blind old lady. She asked, 'Is there any Kurd among you, so and so by name? (here she named me), On being told that there was, she took out some garments and said, 'My son died three days ago and these clothes were his property. Ever since he died, I dream every night that I see Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam commanding me to give these garments to such and such a Kurd!' I took the garments from her and we all put them on. (*Roudh*).

In this story, there are two incidents with a deep moral lesson. Firstly, the providential arrangement for providing sustenance to the blind snake and, secondly, the gift of garments granted by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to the Kurd. When Allah Ta'ala wants to favour someone, it is quite easy for Him to create means to that end, as it is He alone Who creates all means, both of prosperity and adversity. And, it was by virtue of their sincere repentance that these Kurds were granted the gift of garments from Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, which is in itself a great honour and a worthy privilege. Moreover, the story illustrates how, sometimes, Allah Ta'ala grants favours to a needy person through a speedy death! We have heard about many such cases in which a dying man made a will leaving a portion of his property to a particular person.

Ibne Abbas Radhiyallahu anho relates in a Hadith that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said: "If anyone is hungry or in need and he conceals it from others, it will be due from Allah Ta'ala to grant him a year's provision from lawful sources". (*Mishkaat*)

It is related in another Hadith that: "If anyone is hungry or in need but conceals it from others, and asks Allah Ta'ala for help, Allah Ta'ala makes arrangements for him, through which he gets a year's sustenance from lawful (Halal) sources". (*Kanz*)

In still another Hadith it is said: 'Whosoever begs ample pro-

visions from Allah Ta'ala, these are granted to him; and whosoever asks for self-control of ones desires and passions, Allah Ta'ala grants him the same; and the upper hand (the hand of the giver) is better than the lower hand (the hand of the receiver); and no one opens the door towards begging, without having the door opened for him by Allah Ta'ala towards poverty.

Once Ali Radhiyallahu anho, on hearing a person begging from people in the plain of 'Arafat, struck him with a whip and said, "On this day and in this place, do you beg from anyone but Allah Ta'ala" Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said, "Whosoever opens a door towards begging, Allah Ta'ala opens for him a door towards want and destitution, both in this world and the Hereafter. And whosoever opens a door for granting favours, seeking thereby the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, opens for himself a door for abundance both in this world and in the Hereafter."

Another Hadith says, "Whosoever opens a door for begging, Allah Ta'ala opens for him a door towards want and poverty. It is better for one of you to take a rope and bring a load of firewood on the back, sell it and thereby earn the daily bread than that he should beg from people, whether they give him anything or refuse him!" Another Hadith says, 'Whosoever opens a door for granting favours, be it by way of charity to the poor or through spending money for joining bonds of relationship, Allah Ta'ala grants him plenty of everything (i.e. increase in wealth). And whosoever opens a door towards begging, with the intention of increasing his own wealth, it only leads him to a worse destitution.'

Imraan bin Husain Radhiyallahu anho reported Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying: 'He who turns to Allah Ta'ala alone for help, Allah Ta'ala takes upon Himself the responsibility to fulfil all his needs and provides for him from sources he could never imagine; and he who makes this world his sole concern, Allah Ta'ala leaves him to the world (i.e. he is left to toil on his own, without help from Allah Ta'ala, and reap worldly benefits according to the extent of his labour).

Abu Zarr Radhiyallahu anho relates that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said to him: 'I counsel you to observe fear of Allah Ta'ala, both secretly and openly; when you fall into a sin or do any wrong, do a good deed (to atone for it). Do not ask anyone for

anything; do not accept a trust and do not agree to be a Qadhi between two persons (as the job of a Qadhi is delicate, not everybody can be equal to it)". It is related in another Hadith, "He who is pleased with the little that he gets, cultivates contentment and puts his trust in Allah Ta'ala, is saved from the labour of earning livelihood"

It occurs in another Hadith, "Let him, who wishes to become the most powerful person, put his trust in Allah Ta'ala; let him, who wishes to become the richest person, place more reliance on what Allah Ta'ala possesses than he places on what he himself possesses; let him, who wishes to become the most honoured person, observe piety". (We often observe that a man's piety influences people more than anything else. The more advanced anybody is in piety, the greater is the regard and esteem for him in the hearts of people).

Wahb Rahmatullah alaihe relates that Allah Ta'ala says, "When my bondsman puts his trust in Me, I would find a way out for him, even if the skies and the earth were to join together in treachery against him." Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho says, "Allah Ta'ala sent a revelation to Isaa Alaihissalam, 'Put absolute trust in Me, for I shall take upon Myself the responsibility to fulfil all your needs. Choose no one as your protecting friend other than Me, lest I should forsake you'"

It has been narrated in many Ahadith that when the son of Auf Ibne Maalik Radhiallaho anho was taken prisoner (by the non-believers), they bound him tightly with leather-straps so that he should not escape. He was kept without food and most harshly treated. He, however, managed to send word to his father, informing him about his sad plight and requesting Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam to pray for his release. When Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was told of this, he said, "Send someone to him with the word that he should observe piety (Taqwaa), put his trust in Allah Ta'ala and make a point of reciting this verse every morning and evening:"

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَؤُوفٌ  
رَّحِيمٌ ۝ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ



*There hath come unto you a Rasul from amongst yourselves, grievous unto him is aught that distresses you, full of concern for you, for the believers full of pity; merciful. Now if they turn away (O, Muhammad) say: Allah sufficeth me. There is no God save Him. In Him have I put my trust, and He is Lord of the magnificent Throne. (at-Taubah: 128-29)*

When the message reached him, he began to recite this Ayat with the result that, one day, the straps broke of themselves. He escaped from their captivity and also brought home with him some animals of the non-believers captured as booty.

Ibne Abbas *Radhiallahoh anho* says that whosoever recites this verse, at a time when he fears injustice from a ruler, attack by a wild animal or getting drowned in a river, will escape any harm, in-shaa-Allah (if Allah wills it so). A version of the Hadith says that the Sahabi *Radhiallahoh anho* was also advised to recite the following Du'aa frequently:

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

*'There is no might and no power except in Allah'.*

The following Ayaat were also revealed concerning this incident:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا ۝

*And for him who fears Allah, (observes 'Taqwaa') Allah Ta'ala ever appoints a way out; and He provides for him from quarters whence he has no expectation; And who-soever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice for him. (at-Talaq: 2-3)*

Little could this Sahabi *Radhiallahoh anho* imagine that Allah Ta'ala had decreed any part of this sustenance from the property of those (non-believers) who were persecuting him so cruelly.

A Dervish narrates his own story: I lived on the side of a hill with one of my friends and we spent most of our time in prayers and devotions. My friend lived on grass, etc., but for me Allah Ta'ala had so arranged, as a special favour, that a doe would visit me everyday.

It would come and stand beside me, with its legs wide apart; I would suck its milk and it went away. Time went by, but the doe never failed to come and I sucked its milk daily. One day, my friend who lived a little farther away from my place came to me and said, "A caravan of travellers has come to stay at a nearby place. Let us go to them: We might perchance get some milk and other food from them". At first, I refused to go with him but, when he insisted on going, I agreed. We went there and they entertained us with food. Then we came back to our places. Since that day, I waited in vain for the doe to come at its usual time, but it never turned up. Many days passed but the doe did not come. Then I realised that, owing to the evil effect of my (sinful) failing in Tawakkul, Allah Ta'ala had discontinued the sustenance which used to reach me without my having to bother about it".

The author of 'Raudh' writes: "Apparently there were three sins involved in his going to the caravan: first, failure to observe the Tawakkul to which he was committed; secondly, greediness and failure to be content with the sustenance which he got without any bother; thirdly, taking doubtful food which deprived him of good food." The story is quite instructive. Sometimes, we lose the bounties of Allah Ta'ala owing to our greed and avarice. Although seeking help from people brings immediate apparent benefits, its evil effects deprive us of many bounties of Allah Ta'ala, which are being bestowed upon us without our asking for them and without our feeling obliged to Him. So, Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal Rahmatullah alaihe used to pray:

اللَّهُمَّ كَسَامَنْتَ وَجْهِي عَنْ سُجُودٍ غَيْرِكَ فَصَنْ وَجْهِي عَنْ مَسْئَلَةٍ غَيْرِكَ

'O Allah! Thou has protected my head from bowing to anyone other than Thyself; so guard my tongue, O Allah, against asking favours from anyone other than Thyself. (Aameen! O Lord!)

② عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ سَأَلَ النَّاسَ تَكْثُرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَسْأَلُ جَمْرًا فَلْيَسْتَقِلَّ أَوْ لِيَسْتَكْثِرْ رِوَاهُ مُسْلِمٌ  
كَذَا فِي الْمَشْكُوتِ

## HADITH: 2

**Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho** relates that **Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam** said, "He who begs from people to increase what he possesses, is asking for live coals of Jahannam; so let him ask little or much". (*Mishkaat*)

*Note:* Hadith one quoted above is about seeking favours from people at the time of need and, therefore, the threat contained therein viz. the seeker being deprived of help from Allah Ta'ala, is not as severe as the one given in this Hadith, which is about a person begging from people without being driven to it by necessity, but simply to increase his own possessions. Such a one is, in reality, gathering for himself as many live coals of Jahannam as he pleases.

Once, **Umar Radhiallaho anho** said to **Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam**, "Two such and such persons were praising you because you bestowed two (gold) Dinaars upon them." **Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam** said, "As for so and so, I gave him ten to hundred Dinaars but he never made any mention". Then he added, "Some people ask me for something, I give them what they ask and they carry it home, hidden under their arms; though the fact is that they carry nothing but hell-fire." **Umar Radhiallaho anho** said, "O **Rasulullah**! Why do you grant them what they desire, when you know that it is like Hell-Fire for them"? **Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam** replied, "What should I do? They do not refrain from asking and Allah Ta'ala does not like me being niggardly towards anyone".

**Qabeesah Radhiallaho anho** said that once when he was committed to pay an indemnity, he went to **Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam** to seek his help in this matter, he said, "Wait till I receive the Sadaqah from somewhere and I shall help you". **Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam** then said, "Asking financial help from people is permissible only to these three (classes of) persons: a man who has become a guarantor for a payment; his seeking help from people is permissible only to the extent of the amount involved. Secondly, a man who loses his possessions in an accident or mishap; he may ask from people what will provide him a reasonable subsistence. Thirdly, a man who has gone without food for several days and three members of his own tribe confirm this fact; he may



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seek help till he gets what will support life. To any person, other than these three classes, begging is forbidden, and if one does so he is consuming something which is forbidden (Haraam)".

It has been related in another Hadith that: Begging is not permissible to two persons: a well-to-do person or one who is in good health and can earn his living; it is permissible only to one who finds himself in humiliating poverty or is involved in severe debt. And, if anyone begs in order to increase thereby his own possessions, his face will appear lacerated on the Day of Resurrection and he shall be devouring Hell-fire; so let him beg for little or beg for more.

Another Hadith has it to the effect that: Acts of begging will cause facial lacerations, on the Day of Resurrection, which will disfigure his face. So, let him who so wishes preserve his good looks or get his face disfigured. Exempted from the above punishments is the person who seeks favour from a ruler as a share out of the Bait-ul-Maal, provided he can rightfully claim it or is driven to begging by sheer necessity.

Still another Hadith says: "When a man is always begging from people, he will appear on the Day of Resurrection with no flesh on his face". Mas'ud bin 'Amr *Radhiallaho anho* relates that, once, the bier of a person was brought to Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* for funeral prayers. He asked, "What property did he leave behind?" People said, "Two or three Dinaars (gold coins)". Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "Those are two or three brandings of Hell-fire". The narrator of the Hadith says, "I asked about it from Abdullah Ibne Qaasim *Radhiallaho anho*, the bondsman of Abu Bakr *Radhiallaho anho*, who said, 'The person used to beg money from people, thereby to increase his wealth'.

Many such incidents have been related in the collections of Ahadith, in which Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* threatened--with brandings of Hell-fire and other severe punishments of the kind--those who died leaving behind very small amounts. The Ulama say that these punishments are meant for such people who, although they possess money, tell lies, pretending to be needy, and beg from people and insist on being treated like the poor people.

Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: "A good many Traditions (Ahadith) prohibit asking favours and begging from

people, and threaten the beggars with severest punishments in the Akhirah. Some other Traditions, however, refer to the permissibility of seeking monetary help from people under certain circumstances. Obviously, begging in itself, is not permissible for a believer; it becomes permissible only for a person who is driven to it by necessity or faces a pressing demand. In all other circumstances, begging is forbidden. The reasons for its being unlawful are that it involves three things, all of which are unlawful in themselves. First, it involves a tacit complaint against Allah Ta'ala Himself, Who is not, as it were, showing due favour to the person, thus making it necessary for him to turn to others for help. For example, if a slave begs money from people, it will be taken as if his master is hard on him. This state of affairs demands that begging should not be allowed, except when absolutely necessary, just as it is permissible to eat even carrion at the time of utter necessity. Secondly, begging involves humiliating oneself before someone other than Allah Ta'ala. It is below the dignity of a Mo'min to humiliate himself before any person other than Allah Ta'ala. In fact showing ones helplessness and humility to Allah Ta'ala is highly desirable and is blessed, as is abasing oneself before the Loved One. Thirdly, begging often causes vexation to the person from whom a favour is requested. In most cases, the person does not grant a favour, of his own sweet accord, but he does so because he feels ashamed (of saying 'No' to anyone asking a favour). Now, if a person gives something to a person, to avoid being ashamed or for the sake of show, the thing becomes unlawful (Haraam) for the receiver and, even if he refuses, to help, very often, the person feels remorseful afterwards over, his seeming niggardliness towards the beggar. So in both cases, there is likelihood of the beggar being a nuisance to the one from whom he begs a favour; and this is not desirable, unless one is driven to it by sheer necessity. Now that the reasons for unlawfulness of begging have been brought home to us, it will be easy to see why Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has indicated dire consequences for those who beg favours from people.

It is said that Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once remarked, "Whosoever begs a favour from us, we shall grant him what he desires. Why should we refuse him the thing he wants? It is his responsibility to make sure whether asking a favour is permissible for him or not. And he who remains contented and does not ask favours (or, according to an alternative reading, asks Allah Ta'ala to make him independent of people), Allah Ta'ala grants him suffi-

ciency and makes him independent of people. And the one who does not ask us favours is dearer to us than the one who does so". Rasul-ullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* says in another Hadith: "Try to remain contented and abstain from asking favours; the less you ask from people, the better".

Once 'Umar *Radhiallaho anho* came upon a beggar who was begging from people, after Maghrib (evening) prayers. He told someone to give him some food. The orders were instantly carried out and he was served a meal. After a short while, when 'Umar *Radhiallaho anho* again heard him begging, he demanded an explanation from the person who had been told to give him food, who explained that he had served him a meal. 'Umar *Radhiallaho anho* then saw that the beggar had hung a bag under his arm, which contained a lot of bread. He said to him, "You are not a beggar; you are a dealer in bread", meaning that he was not a needy person but he was begging from people in order to collect bread and sell it in the market. Saying this, Umar *Radhiallaho anho* snatched the bag from him and put the bread before the camels which had been given by people as 'Sadaqah' to the Bait-ul-Maal. He then struck the beggar with a whip and said, "Never do this again".

Commenting on the incident, Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes:

If begging had not been an unlawful (Haraam) act, Umar *Radhiallaho anho* would never have struck the beggar with a whip, nor would he have snatched his bread. Some people have taken exception to what Umar *Radhiallaho anho* did to the beggar. They contend that, though whipping can be justified as a lawful admonition as a corrective measure, taking his property (bread) was an act of injustice and wrong-doing as the Shariah (Islamic Law) disallows taking the property of another person.

But this objection is based on ignorance of certain facts. For, who can match Umar *Radhiallaho anho* in the understanding of Islamic Law (Shariah)? Can we imagine that a man of his position and understanding was unaware of the fact that the Shariah disallows taking of other's lawful property? Or, can we imagine that, notwithstanding his awareness of the Islamic Law regarding such matters, Umar *Radhiallaho anho* could not contain his anger at the sight of the unlawful act of begging and he snatched the bread in a



fit of rage? Or, should we presume that he willfully adopted an unlawful measure as an expedient to prevent this man from begging in future? In that case, the act of snatching bread was not justified.

The truth is that the beggar was begging without his being needy, while people gave him bread believing him to be a needy person. Therefore, the bread was not his rightful possession, because it had been acquired through deceiving others. Now as it was difficult to locate the lawful owners of this property, it had to be treated as 'Luqtab' (i.e. things whose owners are not traceable): such things are used for the welfare of the deserving sections of the community (Ummah). Umar Radhiallaho anho, therefore, fed it to the camels received in the Bait-ul-Maal as Sadaqah. The beggar was a sinner as, under false pretences, he extorted Sadaqah from the people. If they had known the facts, they would never have given him Sadaqah.

Now that it has been established that asking favours from people is permissible only in a state of real necessity, it should be understood that there are four gradations of necessity; the first stage is that of dire necessity; the second, that which is a hard necessity but is not as acute as the first one. The third stage is the common state of neediness and the fourth is not being needy at all.

As for the *first* stage--that of dire necessity, it is being in a state in which one fears death from hunger or from a fatal disease; or being in a state in which one has no clothes to cover one's body. In such circumstances, begging is permissible provided that: (a) it is otherwise correct to use the thing asked for; (b) the person whose favour is requested should grant it willingly; (c) the one who is asking a favour should be incapable of earning a living. For, he who begs from people, inspite of his having enough strength to earn a competence, is a worthless person. However, it is permissible for a person engaged in acquiring religious knowledge to ask favours from people, with a view to devoting all his time to the pursuit of knowledge. In the *fourth* stage, (which is the other extreme), it is unlawfull (Haraam) for a person to ask for something which he already possesses; that is to say, if a person possesses cloth sufficient for his present need, it is unlawful for him to ask for cloth from other people.

The two stages in between these two extremes are, (ii) the state bordering on dire necessity but not as acute as the first stage and,

(iii) the state of less acute necessity. In the *second* stage, the state bordering on necessity, begging is allowable with certain reservations but, in this stage also, it is better not to beg from people. The instances of this condition are: (1) a person suffering from a disease that is not a fatal one, and (2) a person possessing clothes but not having sufficient warm clothes to protect himself against cold weather. If such a person begs favours from people, he will not be considered to have committed an unlawful (Haraam) or an uncommendable (Makrooh) act. He must, however, state the true nature of his need to the person of whom he is asking a favour. For instance, while asking for cloth, he should say, 'I have got clothes but they are not sufficient to keep me warm in winter. He should not pretend to be in greater need than he actually is.

The *third* stage is that of necessity of a lower degree. The instances of this condition are : (1) a person possessing enough money to buy plain bread but not enough to buy him curry or soup, or (2) a person having worn-out clothes wanting to buy a new shirt, for use when going outdoors, so that the worn-out clothes should not betray his state of neediness. Asking favours from people is also allowable for such a one, but uncommendable (Makrooh), provided that he clearly states the degree of his necessity to the person of whom he is asking a favour; provided further that, in asking a favour from a person, he should avoid the three unlawful things described above viz. (1) There should be no tacit complaint against Allah *Ta'ala* implied in the manner of asking a favour: (2) He should not humiliate himself before people while asking a favour, and (3) he should not be a source of trouble to the person whose favour he is requesting. A question arises: how can one avoid these three situations? My answer is that one can avoid complaining against Allah *Ta'ala* if, at the time of asking a favour from people, he expresses his gratitude towards Allah *Ta'ala* and also states that he is not pressed by any want. That means he should not ask for things like beggars. For example, he should say, "I do not need it in particular. I am grateful to Allah *Ta'ala* for granting me what suffices for my needs. But my heart craves for fine clothes, etc." And to avoid humiliating oneself before others, one should place one's needs only before one's parents, brothers or intimate friends who, he is sure, possess such noble feelings for him that asking favours from them will not degrade him in their eyes. Another way of avoiding humiliation is asking a favour of a person who is large-hearted and gives away in Sadaqah profusely and feels happy when approached

for favours. In order to avoid embarrassment to people, one should not ask for anything in particular, but express his wish for help in general terms or describe it in such a manner that the person should find it easy to decline his request if he so desires.

It should be borne in mind that the Ulama are unanimously agreed on the unlawfulness of receiving a thing from a person who is giving it against his own will or just to avoid embarrassment or simply because it is begged of him with importunity. Extorting money from people, through begging persistently, is like robbing them by force. Mental torture through censure and slander is also similar. However, he who is forced by necessity may accept a thing given even without the giver's own accord. But the true facts in each case are known to Allah Ta'ala, Who alone can judge whether a person is really in a state of dire necessity. There is however no harm in asking favours of such friends who, one feels, will be happy if one asks them for help. (*Condensed from 'Ihya-ul-Uloom*)

Allama Zubedi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "All these warnings against seeking favours are meant for a person who asks for himself and not for one who asks for the sake of someone else; the latter is motivated by a desire to help others. Similarly, he who seeks the help of his own relatives and friends is not in this category, because they would feel happy when a relative or a friend asks for help". (*Ithaaf*)

(The author adds:) However, this is only true of such relatives who are really pleased to grant such wishes. Otherwise, causing vexation to one's relations is strictly forbidden. It is a fact that the relations who are of generous disposition, feel happy to grant the wishes of their relatives. I say this, on the authority of my own experience, and many incidents testify to the truth of this statement.

One of my father's aunts, who is still alive, used to give me two Paisas as a gift (to spend) whenever she came to visit us in Kandhalah. It had been her routine since my childhood. Later, when I grew up to be a family man, and she also started giving two Paisas each to my children, I insisted that my share should be raised to four Paisas. I said that I would not be treated at par with my children, to which she agreed. I shall ever remember the loving pleasure with which she used to grant my demand; I still feel happy with the joy it gave her. Sometimes, when I saw that she had nothing with her to



oblige me, I used to present to her some money just to enable her to give me my four Paisas. I did this because the joy of giving made her forgetful of the fact that she was just returning me what I had given her myself.

Similarly, Maulana Shamsul Hasan *Rahmatullah alaihe*, my father's maternal uncle, used to give me one Rupee as a gift whenever he visited us, in Kandhlah. When I grew up to be a family man, he transferred this favour to my children. I insisted that my gift should not be discontinued saying, "It is between you and my children whether you give them anything or not, but I must get my share!" I shall ever remember the feeling of joy with which he used to meet my demand. He would laugh heartily and repeat my words, 'My gift-money should not be stopped', and I said, "It never would". Whenever I remember the conversation, I pray to Allah Ta'ala to grant him forgiveness and to bestow on him such bountiful rewards as are worthy of His Glory. On many other occasions, I experienced similar treatment from other relatives. I have mentioned this because, nowadays, family bonds are becoming weaker and it may seem unimaginable these days that a relative should feel happy over a demand for help, made by a near one.

As for the second remark of Allama Zubedi *Rahmatullah alaihe* about the permissibility of asking favours from people for helping others, it is self-evident and the various Ahadith (given in Chapter one of this book), on the subject of helping and favouring others, serve as valid arguments in favour of this observation. Likewise it is imperative for a student to devote himself to religious studies, even at the expense of humiliation in seeking help from others.

Mulla Ali Qari *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: For anyone who has the capacity to earn his living, but does not do so for the sake of devoting his entire time to the acquisition of religious knowledge, it is permissible to receive Zakaat as well as voluntary Sadaqaat from people. But receiving Zakaat is not allowable for one who does not earn his living, notwithstanding his capacity for work, owing to his devotion to Nafl and other prayers, although he can ask help from people out of voluntary Sadaqaat, this last act also being undesirable (Makrooh) in his case. And, if there are some people who live together, engaged in practices for self purification, it is desirable that they should depute someone to arrange for their food and clothing. (*Mirqaat*)

Pursuit of religious knowledge, be it related to external practices or to spiritual purification, is of paramount importance and those who are engaged in it should not take up other occupations. Nor should they take up in any part-time job, for fear of reproach and censure by the ignorant and foolish people. For, it amounts to wasting their invaluable treasure for fear of being reproached by the ignorant who have ever been finding fault with the Divines and even Rasuls of Allah Ta'ala.

Nowadays many people are of the view that religious scholars should also learn a trade for earning their daily bread. This notion is gaining ground and quite a few Ulama, disgruntled at the reproaches by men of the world, have come to regard it as a necessity. Some religious institutions have launched programmes for training the students in various technical skills. The truth is that this practice is detrimental to the cause of knowledge. Those who favour this practice, present (in support of their views) instances from the lives of the great Divines of the past who, in order to earn their living, used to do business, etc., notwithstanding their devotion to the cause of knowledge and their great services for the cause of Deen (Islam). It is truly the best way to serve the cause of Deen if one can, with the help of Allah Ta'ala, afford to adopt this course. But with weak minds and bodies in the troubled times of today, we cannot do both things at a time. Besides, our greed and love of the world will not allow us to devote sufficient time to the pursuit of knowledge and the cause of Deen for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, when we find we have the means to increase our earnings. I have seen many cases in which both the pursuits were started simultaneously but, before long, the wish to earn more money overpowered the pursuit of knowledge.

Explaining the ten guidelines for students, Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: The fourth rule is that the student should spend minimum time in worldly pursuits, leave his family and go farther away from his home town, because numerous social requirements make demands on one's time and distract one from the acquisition of knowledge. Allah Ta'ala has not assigned two hearts to any man (so that he should engage one heart in academic pursuits and the other in earning money). The reference here is to an Ayat from the Holy Qur'an:

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِنْ قَلْبَيْنِ فِي جَوْفِهِ

*'Allah Ta'ala has not assigned two hearts to any man in his breast'. (al-Ahzab: 4)*

If you busy your mind in various pursuits of the world, you cannot get at the truths of knowledge. That is why they say that something of knowledge is granted only to the one who devotes himself whole-heartedly to the acquisition of learning. As for the person who is scatter-brained, his mind is like a water-channel filled with a leaking bucket, which does not water the fields properly because of the leakage of water. (*Ihya*)

It is also important that a student should be really devoted to learning and least concerned about his meals or collecting alms which are, in reality, the dross of people's earnings.

After recounting what occurs in the Ahadith regarding the punishments meant for the wicked Ulama, Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: "It is evident from the above that, generally speaking, the Ulama who are enamoured of this world are the worst and the meanest among men and that, in the Akhirah, their punishment will be far more severe than that of the ignorant people. Successful indeed are those Ulama who always keep the Hereafter in view! And there are certain distinguishing signs of such true Ulama, the first of those being that such an Aalim does not want to acquire worldly wealth through his learning. Even the lowest in rank among the Ulama are fully aware that this material world is contemptible, mean, polluting and shortlived and that the life Hereafter is everlasting and glorious beyond imagination, the bounties whereof are absolutely pure. Besides, a true 'Aalim fully understands that this world and the world Hereafter are like two wives married to one and the same husband--when one is pleased, the other is naturally displeased. There is also a Hadith to the same effect. He who loves his present life does damage to his Akhirah and he who loves his Hereafter does damage to his present life; so prefer what is lasting to what is short-lived. The present life and the Akhirah are, so to speak, like two scales of a balance--when one goes down, the other goes up automatically. And he who does not understand that the material world has low value is not of a sane mind. How can such a one be a scholar of Deen.

Hasan Basari *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "The punishment of the Ulama is the death of their souls; and the death of the soul consists



in one seeking worldly gains in lieu of acts of virtue, that is to say, serving the cause of Deen (Islam) with a view to acquiring worldly wealth, honour, fame or status in life." Yahya bin Mu'az *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that the value of knowledge and learning is lost when one employs it for earning worldly benefits. Saeed Ibne Musayyab *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that when you find an Aalim knocking at the doors of the rich people, he must be dishonest. Umar *Radhiyallahu anho* says, When you find an Aalim in love with worldly wealth, he cannot be blameless in religious matters, for everybody occupies himself with things which are dear to him. (Condensed from *Ihya*.)

It is, therefore, important that the Ulama should always be on their guard lest the love of the world, which is the root-cause of all evils, should imperceptibly enter their minds and take root therein. When one develops a disregard--rather a dislike--for the material world and gets it firmly rooted in one's mind, there is no harm in asking favours from people or receiving Zakaat and Sadaqaat (charities). It is rather the responsibility of the charitable persons that, while paying Zakaat, etc., they should give preference to the students and scholars devoted to religious knowledge. (We have already discussed this point in the Chapter on the manner of paying Zakaat, in Chapter five, part one of this book).

I pray to Allah *Ta'ala* to protect me from being enamoured of this world. For, love of the world is a disease of the soul that grows gradually and imperceptibly and it does not consist in greediness alone, but also includes love for status and popularity. In the latter form, its encroachment on the soul is more rapid; especially in religious environments where the desire for worldly recognition and status is far stronger than the lust for wealth.

③ عَنْ حَكِيمِ بْنِ حَزْرَقٍ قَالَ سَأَلْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَعْطَانِي ثُمَّ سَأَلْتُهُ فَأَعْطَانِي ثُمَّ قَالَ يَا حَكِيمُ إِنَّ هَذَا الْمَالَ خَضِرٌ حُلُوٌّ فَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ بِسَخَاوَةٍ نَفْسٍ بُوْرِكَ لَهُ فِيهِ وَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ بِأُشْرَافٍ نَفْسٍ لَعُونِيَّارٍ لَهُ فِيهِ وَكَانَ كَالَّذِي يَأْكُدُ وَلَا يَتَّبِعُ وَاللَّيْلَةُ الْعُلْيَا خَيْرٌ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ السُّفْلَى قَالَ حَكِيمٌ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِي بَعَثَكَ بِالْحَقِّ لَا أَرَى أَحَدًا بَعْدَكَ شَيْئًا حَتَّى أَفَارِقَ الدُّنْيَا. (متفق عليه كذا في المشكوة)

## HADITH: 3

Hakim Ibne Hizaam *Radhiallaho anho* said that he asked *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* for something and he gave it to him. Later, he asked again and *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, after giving him something, said, "Hakim, this wealth looks desirable and sweet, and he who receives it with a generous heart will be blessed in it; but he who receives it with 'Ishraaf' (inward greed) will not be blessed in it. He would be like one (suffering from a disease) who goes on eating without being satisfied. And the upper hand is better than the lower one (The hand of one who gives is better than that of one who receives it)". Hakim *Radhiallaho anho* stated that he replied, "O *Rasulullah*, by Him Who made you an apostle of truth, I shall not bother anyone after this till I leave the world".

*Note:* 'I shall not bother anyone, means I shall not ask anyone for anything till I die. Some versions of the Hadith add: After this, Abu Bakr *Radhiallaho anho* used to call Hakim *Radhiallaho anho* during the time of his caliphate, in order to bestow upon him his portion of the 'Fai' (the tribute from the territory which the Muslims had conquered), but Hakim *Radhiallaho anho* would not accept it. Umar *Radhiallaho anho* also called Hakim *Radhiallaho anho* to give him his share of the booty but he refused to accept it. Umar *Radhiallaho anho* called people to witness, but Hakim did not accept anything from anyone till he passed away. (*Targheeb*)

Another Hadith has the following effect: *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* received some valuables from Bahrain. He first gave something out of it to Abbaas *Radhiallaho anho*. Then he called Hakim *Radhiallaho anho* and gave him a handful. Hakim *Radhiallaho anho* asked *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* whether or not it was good for him to receive it. On receiving the reply that it was not, he returned the gift and swore that he will not accept from anyone any such thing till his death. Then he said, "O *Rasulullah*, pray for me to Allah *Ta'ala* that He may bless me in my earnings". *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, then prayed to Allah *Ta'ala* to bless him in what he had earned with his own hands. (*Targheeb*)

Mu'awiyah *Radhiallaho anho* reported *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* as saying "Do not beg importunately, for I swear by Allah *Ta'ala* that anyone of you who gets out of me what he asks, against my own will, will not be blessed in what I have given him". Another Hadith says, "(Anyone of you) Whom I give something of my own sweet accord, will be blessed in it; but the one who gets something out of me against my will (simply because he is greedy or because he has asked for it), will be like (a person) who goes on eating without being satisfied." Ibne-Umar *Radhiallaho anho* reported *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* as saying, "Do not ask for favours importunately, for whosoever gets something from us, after having begged it importunately, will receive it without blessing". (*Targheeb*)

There also occurs a prohibition, against begging importunately, in the Holy Qur'an. Says Allah *Ta'ala*:

لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِلْحَاقًا

*They do not beg of men with importunity. (al-Baqarah: 273)*

Aishah *Radhiallaho anha* relates that *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "This wealth is attractive and sweet; so whomsoever we give something of our own sweet accord, while he is in a condition that justifies his receiving it, and does not have any greed for it, he will receive blessings of Allah *Ta'ala* concerning what he gets out of us. And, if we give something to a person against our own sweet will, while he does not deserve to receive it and is greedy for it, he will not be blessed in what he gets out of us". (*Targheeb*)

'Barkat' or Allah's blessings are, indeed, a great and invaluable bounty. A small amount of something invested with blessings (Barakat) suffices for a surprisingly large number of needs, as happened on many occasions during the times of *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*. For example, once a bowl full of milk, simply because of such blessings, sufficed for a large number of the 'Ashaab-us-Suffah'. We also experience this effect of Barakat in several cases, even in our own times, though not to the same extent as occurred during the times of *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*. A thing divested of Allah's blessings (Barakat) has different effects. The money earned by a person, if it is not blessed, is always insufficient for his needs; the more he earns, the greater are his requirements; he is like a person, mentioned in the Hadith above, who goes on eating without being satisfied.



Here, I relate a personal experience to illustrate how one's leisure hours, when divested of Allah's blessings, seem to slip away at an unimaginably fast speed. In my boyhood days, I was very fond of holding a sort of poetic quiz competition, in which two teams competed with each other in reciting verses from memory. As my father *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who was otherwise a stern parent, did not object to these contests, our fondness for them increased as we advanced in years. I knew by heart, without any exaggeration, thousands of verses from the poetry of various languages (though many have now escaped my memory). It was my favourite hobby and, whenever my best friends and relatives got together, we began reciting verses, and started a contest. During the early days of my youth I happened to visit Kerana and stayed there for the night with one of my cousins who lived there and practised law. He was also very fond of this recreation or rather, one might say, it was his weakness. Some other relatives of mine, who heard of my visit, also assembled there. After 'Isha (night) prayers, the pastime began. It was winter and my cousin bought three seers of milk because he thought we would need it for making tea several times during the night, as the competition usually lasted throughout the night. We were busy in our pastime and the first course of tea had not yet been served when I felt like going to the toilet and got out of the room. We thought that it was the beginning of the game and that only two or three quarters of an hour had elapsed. Looking eastward, I saw a white radiance on the horizon and wondered what this white glow could mean. I called my companions. They came out and were also astonished to see the light. Everybody was making conjectures when, to our utter amazement, we heard the Azaan from all the four corners of the city. Then, of course, we realised that it was dawn. So, that long winter night had passed so swiftly and so imperceptibly! Throughout that day, I remained in a strange mood of amazement and, even today, whenever I remember it a strange sensation runs through my body. That night had been so frightfully divested of 'Barakat' (blessings) that it looked unimaginably short in duration. And now with age, my feelings of amazement at the incident have given way to a deep sense of remorse and self-admonition. I imagine that, like that night of Kerana, my whole life span, when viewed in retrospect after death, would seem to have slipped away so swiftly. The following night, my cousin dreamt that he saw his father (my uncle), Maulana Raziyy-ul-Hassan *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who had learnt Hadith from Qutb-ul-Aalam, Maulana Gangohi *Rahmatullah alaihe*, saying to him, "It looks strange that a pious man like

Zakariyya should spend all night in such idle pursuits." Perhaps it was owing to his blessed wishes and concern for my spiritual well-being that, since that day, I have never indulged in this pastime. The memory of that night spent in Kerana has filled me with astonishment, ever since. I have, however, drawn two conclusions from this incident, based on clear conceptions:

Firstly, I realised the truth of those incidents about some Divines who would stand in Nafl (supererogatory) prayers throughout the night and others who, after their wudhu for Isha prayers, did not need to make a fresh Wudhu (ablution) for Fajr prayers, as they remained busy in their devotions, supplications, etc., to Allah Ta'ala during the entire night. All such incidents are true and stand to reason. As a matter of fact, when one is rapt in a mood of heavenly bliss, the long hours of night slip by unnoticed and sleep has no power over such raptures; as a special favour from Allah Ta'ala, such pious beings derive a peculiar delight from their devotions. Obviously, those who are denied this bliss find it hard to stay awake during the night.

Secondly, my experience of that night testifies to the truth of what has been said in a Hadith regarding the Day of Qiyamah (Resurrection), the span of which is fifty thousand years, but which will be made so short for some believers that it will be equal in duration to the time spent in performing one Salaat or (according to an alternate version) the time that elapses between two Salaats. Certainly, the virtuous men who have no sins reckoned against them shall have no fears and, by virtue of their A'maal (good deeds), they will enjoy the privileges promised to such people in the Quranic Verse:

الْأَرْحَامُ وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْأَسْفَلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

*Lo! Verily, the friends of Allah are those on whom fear cometh not, nor do they grieve. (Yunus: 62)*

They will be seated in the shade of the 'Arsh (the Throne of Allah Ta'ala), absorbed in enjoying the fruits of their A'maal. So, the length of that Day will appear to them like brief moments of fleeting joy.

③ عَنْ خَالِدِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ الْجَمْعِيِّ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ مَنْ بَلَغَهُ عَنْ أَخِيهِ مَعْرُوفٌ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَسْئَلَةٍ وَلَا إِشْرَافٍ لِنَفْسِهِ

فَلْيَقْبَلْهُ وَلَا يَرُدَّهُ فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ ذِقُّ سَاقَةِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَيْهِ (رواه احمد  
 بإسناد صحيح وابن حبان في صحيحه والحاكم كذا في الترغيب)

## HADITH: 4

**Khalid Ibne Ali Radhiallahoh anho** reported **Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam** as saying: If anyone happens to receive something from his brother Muslim, without his asking for it and without his feeling inwardly greedy for it, he should not reject it but rather accept it, for it is his sustenance which has been sent by Allah Ta'ala.

**Note:** There are quite a number of Ahadith to the effect that, if anyone receives a gift from someone, without asking for it and without being greedy for it, he should accept it; for its non-acceptance amounts to a rejection of the Bounty of Allah Ta'ala and implies ingratitude towards Him. That is why most of the Sheikhs (Divines) accept gifts from people, even against their own sweet will.

**Abdullah Ibne Umar Radhiallahoh anho** relates: "At times when **Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam** gave me some gift, I would say, 'O Rasulallah, give it to someone who has more need of it;' but he said, "Take it. Take what comes to you from these worldly things when you have neither openly asked for it, nor have had any greed for it. Then make use of it if you can; and if you do not like to use it, give it away as Sadaqah. And, in no circumstances, desire anything that does not come to you on its own". **Sealim son of Abdullah Bin Umar Radhiallahoh anho** says: "It was on account of this Hadith that **Ibne Umar Radhiallahoh anho** would not ask anything from anyone, but if something came to him unasked, he would not refuse it."

A similar incident has been reported of **Umar Radhiallahoh anho**: when **Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam** granted him some gift, but he gave it back to him. When **Rasulullah** asked him why he had done so, he submitted, "O Rasulallah, you have told us that it is better for us not to take anything from anyone. "At this **Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam** said, "What I meant was that you should not ask for things from people; but if anything comes to you without asking, it is your sustenance from Allah Ta'ala, bestowed upon you by Him", At this, **Umar Radhiallahoh anho** submitted, "By Him Who



holds my soul in His hands, if anything comes to me without asking, I shall accept it"; Once Abdullah bin Aamir *Radhiallaho anho* sent, through a messenger a certain amount of money and some cloth as a gift to Aishah *Radhiallaho anha*. She refused to accept it, saying, "It is not my custom to take anything from anyone". But when the messenger was leaving and had just gone outside the house, she called him back, took the gift from him and said, 'I have been reminded of what Rasulallah *Sallallah alaihe wasallam* said to me once; "O Aishah, if you happen to get something without your asking for it, do accept it, for it is your sustenance that has been sent to you by Allah *Ta'ala*". Probably this incident pertains to the early period of her life. After this, Aishah *Radhiallaho anha* used to accept gifts from people. It has been related in various Ahadith that many Sahabah used to present large sums of money to her, which she accepted but, instantly, distributed them among people as Sadaqah.

Wasil Ibne Khatthaab *Radhiallaho anho* says that he asked Rasulallah *Sallallah alaihe wasallam* about his prohibition against asking anything from anyone. Rasulallah *Sallallah alaihe wasallam* replied, "I forbade you to ask anything from anyone, but if Allah *Ta'ala* bestows upon you something without your asking for it, do take it; for it is your sustenance sent to you by Allah *Ta'ala*". Abu Hurairah *Radhiallaho anho* relates that Rasulallah *Sallallah alaihe wasallam* once said, "Anyone who is granted some bounty by Allah *Ta'ala* (through someone offering it to him as a gift) should accept it; for it is his sustenance sent to him by Allah *Ta'ala*". Asbid bin Umar *Radhiallaho anho* relates that Rasulallah *Sallallah alaihe wasallam* said: 'Anyone who is presented some gift without having asked for it and without 'Ishraaf' lurking in his mind (i.e. without feeling inwardly greedy for it), should accept it and spend liberally on his needs. And, if he does not need it, he should give it to someone who has greater need of it'. Abdullah, son of Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal *Rahmatullah alaihe*, says, "I asked my father, 'What is 'Ishraaf?' He replied, 'It consists in your having expectations of receiving a gift from someone or wishing inwardly that such and such person should send you a gift'. (*Targheeb*)

Literally the Arabic word, 'Ishraaf' means to peep. Here it means: a state of mind in which one's greedy self is on the watch for something to come to him. For example, as Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal *Rahmatullah alaihe* puts it, a person who may desire that so and so should do him a favour, is said to have 'Ishraaf. It is in view of this

definition of the term that many Ulama interpret 'Ishraaf' as something tantamount to avarice and greed because, in this state also, one is anxious to get something from people. Allama 'Aini *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Some Ulama say that 'Ishraaf' signifies excessive greediness; others are of the view that 'Ishraaf' indicates getting something from a person who gives it away with a heavy heart".

Explaining the guidelines for accepting a gift that comes without asking for it, Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: "Three things should be taken into consideration; the gift itself, the intention of the giver and the intention of the person receiving it". In the first place, one should consider and make sure about the nature of the gift. A gift may be refused if one is sure that it has been procured from un-lawful or questionable sources. Secondly, one should make certain about the intention of the giver. That is to say, one should make sure whether he is

- (i) presenting the thing as a 'Hadiyyah' (gift), in the true sense of the word, thereby seeking merely to please his brother Muslim and to win his love for himself;
- (ii) intending it to be a 'Sadaqah'; or,
- (iii) giving it simply for fame and ostentation, or for some evil designs. (A reference to these motives will be made in a Hadith, in the following pages).

Now, if it is a 'Hadiyyah' (gift), in the true sense, it is part of the Sunnah to accept such gifts; there occur, in the Ahadith, many exhortations to present gifts to one another and to accept them. Such a gift should be accepted, provided there is no likelihood of the receiver coming under heavy obligation; in such a case, he may decline; alternatively he may keep a portion of the gift and return the rest to allay the sense of obligation: Once, a person presented Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* with a ram, some Ghee (butter-oil) and some cheese. He accepted the Ghee and the cheese, but returned the ram. It was a revered custom of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* that he accepted gifts from some persons and declined these from others. Once, he said, "I feel inclined to accept a present only from a Quraishi, an Ansari, a Thaqafi, or a Dausi". This remark was occasioned by the following incident. Once a desert Arab presented Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* with

a young she-camel, in return for which he gave him six young camels, it being a custom with him to make very liberal returns for the gifts. The person was displeased because he thought the return was less than what he had expected. When Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* heard about it, he gave a sermon in which he told the people about the incident and said that he felt inclined to accept presents only from people mentioned above. He exempted these tribes because he was confident of their sincerity and devotion to him. (Bazl)

It has been reported in many Traditions that the Followers (*Tabi'een*) of the Sahabah used to accept presents sometimes and declined them on other occasions. It is said that Fatah Ibne Shakhraf Mausle *Rahmatullah alaihe* was given a present of a bag containing fifty Dirhams (silver coins). He said, "I have heard that Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once said, "Whoever receives a provision, without his asking for it, but refuses to accept it, is like one who is rejecting his provision sent to him by Allah *Ta'ala*". He then took a Dirham out of the bag and returned the rest to the donor. Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* (a well-known *Tabi'ee*) is also one of the narrators of the Hadith quoted above. Once, however, he declined to accept a bag of Dirhams and a bundle of fine cloth made in Khurasan, which were presented to him as a gift, saying, "Whoever is in my position i.e. entrusted with the task of giving sermons, admonishing people, affording spiritual guidance, etc, and still receives such presents from people, will have nothing to expect when he meets Allah *Ta'ala* (on the Day of Judgement). For, in accepting such gifts, there is a semblance of receiving worldly gains in recompense for the work of Deen".

Ubaadah *Radhiallaho anho* narrates: "I taught the Qur'an to some persons of the 'Ashaab-us-Suffah.' One of them presented me a bow as a gift. I said to myself, "This cannot be reckoned as worldly gain and I may make use of it for fighting in the Path of Allah *Ta'ala*". Still, I thought I must ask Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* about it'. When I asked him about it, he replied, 'If you want to have a necklace of Fire put on you, accept it.' (Abu Dawood). It becomes manifest from this Hadith and from what Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* said on the subject that the Ulama and the Sheikhs, who are engaged in delivering sermon and doing other tasks of spiritual guidance, should be far more cautious and strict in the matter accepting gifts. Notwithstanding his strict attitude



regarding the acceptance of gifts, Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to accept gifts from his intimate friends as, in such cases, there was no likelihood of the gift being in lieu of the work of Deen. It is reported of Ibrahim Taimi *Rahmatullah alaihe* that he would accept one or two Dirhams from his intimate friends but declined the offer of hundreds of Dirhams from other people. It is said about certain Divines that when one of them was offered a gift he (the donor) was told to keep it with him and consider whether, after accepting his gift, he would hold him (the Divine) in higher esteem than he did before accepting it. If so, he would accept the gift otherwise not.

Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "The sign of this (higher esteem) is that the donor should feel dismayed if his gift is not accepted. And, he should feel happy if it is accepted. The giver should regard the recipient as his benefactor". Bishr *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "I have never asked a favour from anyone other than Sirri Saqati. I always ask from him because I believe that he is a perfect 'Zaahid' (an ascetic). I know for certain that he takes pleasure in giving away things and it weighs upon his mind to retain worldly goods. So, I partake of his favours simply to increase his pleasure".

It is said that a man from Khurasan came to visit Junaid of Baghdad *Rahmatullah alaihe* and brought, with him, many valuables as a gift for the Sheikh. When Junaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "Well, I will take it and distribute the things among the needy people, he said, "I am not presenting it to you for this purpose; I wish you would spend it on your own requirements (food, drink, etc.)" Junaid replied, "How can I expect to live long enough to exhaust all this fortune?" The man said, "I do not want you to spend it on vinegar and vegetables. (These are cheap and so it would take long to spend the entire amount of money). I wish that you would spend it for buying sweets and other delicacies of food". Junaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* then accepted the gift. At this the Khurasanite said, "My debt of gratitude to you is greater than what I owe to anyone else in Baghdad, to which the Sheikh replied, 'One must accept a gift presented by a person like you.' (the discourse on gifts is concluded here).

The second category of material favours are those which fall under the heads 'Zakaat' (the obligatory poor-due) and Sadaqaat' the supererogatory charities. If what is offered, falls under the head

'Zakaat,' the receiver should, before accepting it, make sure whether it is lawful for him to take it. (This subject has been treated, in some detail, at the end of the section on Zakaat in the first part of the book). And if the thing presented falls under the head of 'Sadaqaat', the receiver should make sure why the person is giving it to him. If he is giving it to him because he considers him to be a pious man, the receiver should examine himself to see whether he is secretly committing a sin which, if known to the donor, would have caused such repugnance in his mind that he would never have given him anything. If this is so, it becomes unlawful for him to accept this 'Sadaqah'. For, it is like an ignorant person being presented a gift because people regard him an Alim, or a non-Sayyed (a Sayyed is a descendant of Rasulullah). In such cases, it is strictly forbidden to receive gifts or Sadaqaat from people. And, if a person is giving something just for show or for fame, one should, in no circumstances, accept his gift. Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* forbade taking the food of vain-glorious persons. Sufyaan Thauri *Rahmatullah alaihe* declined to accept certain presents, saying, "I would accept it if I were certain that the donor would not talk of it boastfully, afterwards."

Some Divines when they were criticised for not accepting gifts, said, 'We decline gifts out of pity for the donors, because if we accept their gifts, they talk of it boastfully to the people and thus they lose their reward in the Akhirah. So, why should we allow their wealth to be wasted, without earning them any Heavenly rewards'. The third point to be considered is the intention of the person receiving the benefit. If he is a needy person, and the property is not tainted as mentioned above, it is better for him to accept it. For, Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once remarked to the effect that; "The one who receives a material benefit (from a brother Muslim), provided he is really in need of it, also earns blessings, his share of blessings being no less than that of the giver."

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* also said, "He who is granted some material things by Allah *Ta'ala* (through a person presenting it to him), without his asking for it and without 'Ishraaf' in his mind, should accept it, for it his own sustenance which has been bestowed upon him by Allah *Ta'ala*". I have just quoted a number of Ahadith on this subject. The Ulama say, "It is feared that the one who does not accept a gift which comes to him without his asking for it, would, on other occasions, feel obliged to ask for things which will not be given to him."

## CH. VI: AHADITH - THE EXCELLENCE OF TAWAKKUL

It is said that Sirri Saqati *Rahmatullah alaihe* would often send presents to Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal *Rahmatullah alaihe*, which he would gladly accept. Once, however, the Imaam declined to accept his gift. Sirri *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "Ahmad, the burden of rejecting a Hadiyyah is greater than the one in accepting it." The Imaam *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "Could you repeat what you have just said". The Sheikh repeated his remarks. The Imaam then said, "I did not accept it as I had sufficient provisions for a month. Kindly keep it with you a month, after which you can bestow it upon me." Some Ulama are of the view that whoever declines a favour, notwithstanding his need, is punished by Allah *Ta'ala*, one way or the other, such as becoming greedy or being forced to accept these things of questionable origin or some other affliction of the kind. If the person who is offered a 'Hadiyyah' does not need it, he may consider, that in case he lives by himself and has no social obligations, whether he should keep with him more than what suffices him for his present needs. For, keeping things in excess would amount to yielding to one's selfish desires and it could lead him in to a trial and some mischief. If such a person is at all obliged to accept a gift, for one reason or the other, he should distribute it among others.

(As stated above), Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal *Rahmatullah alaihe* declined the gift presented by Sirri Saqati *Rahmatullah alaihe* because he did not need the money himself; and also, he did not like to occupy himself in distributing it among the people. The Imaam was fully aware of the difficulties involved in such matters and prudence demands that one may keep away from possible perils, as no one can feel secure anytime from the treachery of Shaitan.

A resident of Makkah Mukarramah narrates his story thus: "I had some Dirhams which I had kept for spending in the Path of Allah. I happened to listen to the invocation of a Dervish who, after having made 'Tawaaf' (circumambulation of the Ka'bah) was clinging to the curtains of the Ka'bah and praying to Allah *Ta'ala* in very low tones, thus: 'O Allah! Thou knowest that I am hungry. Thou knowest that I have no clothes to put on. O! Thou Who seest everyone but to Whom no one can see! I turned round to look at him and saw that he was wearing two worn out and ragged sheets of cloth, which only just covered his body. I said to myself, 'Who can be more deserving than this Dervish for receiving my Dirhams! I went over to him and presented to him my entire collection, out of which he took only five Dirhams and returned the rest saying, 'Four



Dirhams can buy me two sheets of cloth and one Dirham is sufficient to buy me food for three days". The following night I saw him again, dressed in two sheets of new cloth. I felt suspicious of him. He also noticed me and caught me by the hand. We began to make Tawaaf together while I felt that, in the course of all the seven rounds of Tawaaf, we were walking over mineral wealth--like gold, silver, rubies, jewels, diamonds, etc. I could see and feel these valuables moving under my feet, though all the other people could not see them. The Dervish then said to me, "Allah Ta'ala has bestowed all these bounties upon me but I do not like to spend out of these treasures. I always receive Hadiyyah (a gift) from the people and spend them on my needs, because it is beneficial for their souls and, by virtue of giving away things as Sadaqah, they earn blessings of Allah Ta'ala".

I have related all these incidents to show that accepting, from people, more money than what one needs, may lead one into trials and temptations. Extra wealth is always granted by Allah Ta'ala as a test to see whether or not the person receiving it will spend it with propriety. But receiving as much as only just suffices for one's needs is a blessing of Allah Ta'ala and one should learn to distinguish between the trials and blessings of Allah Ta'ala Who say:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لِّهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا .....

*"Lo! We have placed all that is on the earth as an ornament thereof that We may try them, which of them are best in conduct. Lo! And We shall make all that is therein a barren mound (without growth or herbage). (The trial is meant to distinguish those who perform virtuous deeds from those who do not i.e. Allah Ta'ala puts them to trial to see whether they will be fascinated by the glamour of the world and become forgetful of their Creator or turn away from the adornments of the world and engage in devotion to Allah Ta'ala). (al-Kahf: 7)*

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said: "The son of Adam has a right only to the following three: sufficient food to keep his back straight, a garment with which to cover his body and a house to live in (which only just suffices for his needs). Whatever exceeds these three is wealth (regarding which he will have to face reckoning on the Day of Judgement).' So, anyone possessing enough money for

these three necessities of life will earn virtues in the Hereafter and the one keeping in excess will, at least face a reckoning, even if he has not disobeyed Allah Ta'ala in procuring it or spending it. And he who keeps extra amount and also disobeys Allah Ta'ala with regard to it, will have to suffer punishment in the Hereafter. Whatever exceeds one's needs should, therefore, be distributed among the needy people.

These prohibitions and precautions are meant for those who live alone by themselves. For a person having many social obligations, or one possessing a generous nature or one who associates with a number of Dervishes and pious people and, therefore, feels obliged to provide for their needs, there is no harm in accepting donations from people, even though these exceed his immediate requirements. Such persons should, however, distribute the donations among the needy people, immediately after receiving them. Keeping extra amount of money in possession, even for a night, may breed temptation, distract one's mind from devotions or make one niggardly in spending money for the cause of Allah Ta'ala. Such a person may also borrow money from people and spend it for collective needs--trusting in Allah Ta'ala and feeling confident that Allah Ta'ala will arrange for the payment of his debts. (Thyaa)

⑤ عَنْ أَنَسٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا اقْرَضَ أَحَدُكُمْ قَرْمًا فَأَمْدَى إِلَيْهِ أَوْ حَمَلَهُ عَلَى الدَّابَّةِ فَلَا يَرْكَبُهُ وَلَا يَقْبَلُهَا إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ جَرَى بَيْتَهُ وَبَيْتَهُ قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ. (رواه ابن ماجه والبيهقي في الشعب هذا في المشكوة)

#### HADITH: 5

Anas Radhiallaho anho narrates that Rasulallah Sallallah alaihe wasallam said, "When one of you makes a loan to someone and the borrower sends him a present or provides him an animal to ride, he must neither ride the animal nor accept the gift, unless it is a practice they followed previously."

**Note:** The Hadith means that, if they were previously accustomed to exchange gifts or borrow things from each other, there is no harm in accepting gifts, etc, from the borrower. But if they were not on such terms and the debtor is presenting things to the creditor

simply because he owes him some money, he must not accept it, for it amounts to usury. In another Hadith, Abu Burdah says that Abdullah Ibne Salaam *Radhiyallahu anho* said to me, 'You live in a land where usury is common, so when anyone owes you anything and presents you with a load of straw or a load of barley or a load of grass, do not accept it, for it is usury.' So, before accepting a gift, the receiver should ascertain that the donor has no such evil intention in his mind; for example, if a debtor presents a gift to his creditor so that the latter should not demand payment of his debt, it (the gift) becomes a bribe, besides being usury.

It has been narrated in a number of Ahadith that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* cursed the one who bribes and the one who accepts bribes. Abdullah Ibne Umar *Radhiyallahu anho* narrates that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* invoked the curse of Allah *Ta'ala* on the one who bribes and the one who takes bribes. It has been narrated in another Hadith that the curse of Allah *Ta'ala* befalls the one who bribes and the one who takes bribes. It has been related in still another Hadith that the one who gives bribes and the one who accepts bribes will both go to Jahannam.

Another Hadith says, 'A community among whose members usury is common are afflicted with famine; and a community whose members practice bribery is haunted by awe and fear of other people.' There are many Ahadith stating that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* cursed the one who takes bribes, the one who bribes others and the one who acts as go-between regarding a bribe. Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* sent a man to collect Sadaqah (Zakaat and voluntary Sadaqaat). He on his return said, "This part of the collection is Sadaqah and this was presented to me as a gift". On this Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* admonished the people thus, "I employ some people to collect Sadaqah and yet one of them comes and says, "This is Sadaqah and this is a gift which was presented to me". Why did he not sit in his father's or his mother's house and see whether the gift would be given to him or not (to the end of the Hadith)". (*Mishkat*)

We have observed that, according to the foregoing Ahadith, a creditor can accept a gift from his debtor only if they have been previously accustomed to exchange presents. Similarly, the admonition contained in this Hadith implies that if a person, who is not a ruler (or a collector of Sadaqah), is presented with something while



sitting at home (not holding any office), it is really a gift. On the other hand, if anyone receives something by virtue of his office as a ruler, it is not a gift.

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said: "If anyone intercedes for someone and that one gives him for it a present, which he accepts, he enters a big door among the doors of usury (i.e. becomes guilty of a serious type of usury)". (*Mishkaat*). Ma'az Radhiallaho anho says: "Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam sent me to Yemen, but when I set off he sent a person after me and I was brought back. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then said, 'Do you know why I sent after you? Do not take anything without my permission, for it is dishonest dealing', and (says Allah Ta'ala)":

وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ

"And he who acts dishonestly will come on the Day of Resurrection with the dishonest deeds (loaded on his back)". (*Aale 'Imran: 161*)

Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho reported, "Rifa'ah Radhiallaho anho presented Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam with a slave called Mid'am who accompanied him on the expedition to Khaiber. On one occasion, Mid'am was taking down the saddle of Rasulullah's camel when a stray arrow struck him and he died. The people said, 'Congratulations to him! He died a martyr.' (It was really an occasion for congratulations because he was a slave-boy of Rasul-ullah and he was blessed with martyrdom). But Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, 'Not at all! The blanket that he took dishonestly has become a fiery wrapping around him.'

Zaid bin Khalid Radhiallaho anho narrates: "One of the Companions of Rasulullah died at the battle of Hunain. When his funeral was ready, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was requested to lead his funeral prayers, but he said, 'Do it yourself'. At this, they looked dejected. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam noticed their anxiety and said, 'Your companion was dishonest (about booty in the path of Allah)'. Zaid Radhiallaho anho said that they searched his belongings and found some Jewish beads not worth even two Dirhams." (*Durr-e-Manthur*). Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said: "Allah is pure and accepts

only what is good and pure, and He has given the same command to the Mo'mineen (believers) as He has given to His Rasul saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا

*'O Rasuls! Eat of what is good and pure and act righteously'. (al-Mu'minun: 51)*

And He said to the believers:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ

*"O you who believe! Eat of the good and pure things We have provided for you". (al-Baqarah: 172)"*

Then Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam mentioned a man who makes a long journey (and the Du'aas or supplications of those who are making a journey are accepted) with his hair dishevelled and his body covered with dust (a state which speaks of his being very humble and poor), who stretches out his hands to Heaven, in supplication (Du'aas) saying, 'O Allah!', when his food, drink and clothing have come to him from unlawful (Haraam) sources and he has been nourished by what is unlawful (Haraam). He then asked how the supplications (Du'aas) of such a one could be accepted." In another Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has been reported as saying: "A time will come when a person will not care whether what he gets has come to him from a lawful (Halaal) or an unlawful (Haraam) source". (Mishkaat)

In the books on Ahadith, there are many more Traditions on various subjects, which admonish people to be vigilant about the sources of their income, and advise them to beware lest they should be swayed by avarice, and choose not to notice the unlawful nature of their income. In this connection, the Ulama are especially required to keep vigilant and guard the sources of their income. Their responsibility is greater than that of common people because they can, by themselves, distinguish the lawful from that which is unlawful. Particular care should be taken, in these matters, by the Ulama who are responsible for running Madrasahs (free schools for imparting religious knowledge) or other such people who collect funds in the form of donations and contributions, etc.

Our spiritual leader and guide, Maulana Shah Abdur Rahim of Raipur, who was an illustrious descendant of the great personages of our spiritual line, used to say, "I feel more afraid (of having to make use) of the funds of these Madrasahs than of the money individually owned by someone". For, if anyone has been careless in handling money owned by an individual, he can ask that person to pardon him; (if he does so) the sin of misuse is expiated. But the funds of Madrasahs consist of donations and subscriptions of so many people; and those who manage their finances are trustees in charge of these funds. Therefore, if anyone makes an unlawful or dishonest use of these funds and the trustees pardon his guilt, the sin is not expiated. Rather, the trustees also become accomplices in the guilt, by the very act of pardoning him. May Allah, in His infinite Mercy and Compassion protect us from sinning against His Laws regarding the rights of His men! One has to be very cautious in these matters because of their gravity.

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said: "On the Day of Judgment, there will be three courts. There is one in which forgiveness is out of question viz. the one for deciding matters relating to oneness of Allah *Ta'ala* and ascribing partners to Him. Says Allah *Ta'ala* Who is great and glorious.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يُشْرِكْ بِهِ

*Lo! Allah pardoneth not that partners should be ascribed unto Him. (an-Nisa: 116)*

There is one court in which Allah *Ta'ala* will not leave without reckoning, till requital is made among the people viz. people's wrong-doing to one another (i.e. inflicting physical and mental torture, like abusing, slandering people, casting aspersions on their character, etc., or usurping the property belonging to others). And then there is one for matters relating to the rights of Allah *Ta'ala* over His people. That is in the Hands of Allah *Ta'ala*: if He wishes, He will punish them, but if He wishes He will pardon. (*Mishkaat*)

I have quoted this Hadith to stress the point that one should be very cautious and strictly watch the sources of one's income. For, if a person earns unlawful (Haraam) property, his supplications to Allah *Ta'ala* are not accepted (as mentioned above). Nor does Allah *Ta'ala* accept the Sadaqat (charities) taken out of unlawful money (as



stated in numerous traditions quoted in the Chapter on Zakaat, in Part one of this book). What is more, we have quoted a few Ahadith to this effect: 'Fire of Jahannam is more fitting for all flesh which has grown out of what is unlawful (Haraam)'. The same subject is further elucidated in the commentary on Hadith Six that follows. May Allah, in His bounteous mercy, protect us from devouring unlawful (Haraam) property Ameen!

⑥ عَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَا تَزُولُ قَدَمَا ابْنِ آدَمَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يُسْأَلَ عَنْ خَمْسٍ عَنْ عَمَلِهِ فِي مَا آفَنَاهُ وَعَنْ شَبَابِهِ فِي مَا أَبْلَاهُ وَعَنْ مَالِهِ مِنْ أَيْنَ اكْتَسَبَهُ وَفِيمَا أَنْفَقَهُ وَمَاذَا عَمِلَ فِي مَا عَلِمَ. (رواه الترمذی وقال حديث غريب كذا في المشكوة ص ۲۳۵) وقد روى هذا الحديث عن معاذ بن جبل و أبي بزة الأسدي في الترغيب،

#### HADITH: 6

**Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said: "On the Day of Resurrection, the feet of the son of Adam will be powerless to move away (from the Place of Reckoning) till he is questioned about five matters (and gives a resonable account): (1) on what he spent his life, (2) in what pursuits he passed his youth, (3) whence he procured his wealth, (4) on what he spent it, and (5) what he did regarding the knowledge he possessed".**

**Note:** In this Hadith, which has been narrated by a number of Sahabah, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has briefly enumerated all of the matters of which everybody will have to render an account on the Day of Resurrection. Each one of these subjects (of reckoning) has been specifically treated in various other Ahadith and men have been forewarned against the Reckoning they will have to face on the Day. First and foremost, everybody will have to render an account of his entire lifetime, every second of which is an invaluable asset for man. He will be required to answer the question: in what pursuits did you spend your life? What were we created for? Is there any serious purpose, any important motive behind the creation of mankind? Or, were they created for nothing? Allah Ta'ala Himself admonishes His men to take this life seriously:

الْحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾

*Deemed you then that We had created you in jest (for nothing) and that you would not be returned to Us (for rendering an account of your life)? (al-Mu'minun: 115)*

What is more, Allah Ta'ala Himself has, at another place in the Holy Qur'an, explained the purpose for which this life was created:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

*'I created the Jinn and humankind only that they may obey Me.'*  
(az-Zariyat: 56)

So, everybody should consider and see how many precious moments of his life time are being spent on the occupations for which he was created by Allah Ta'ala--on the struggle to achieve the aim and object-of his life--and how much time is being spent on the so-called necessities of life, recreations and other pursuits that bear no relation to the real purpose of his life.

Suppose you employ a builder to do some construction work. You will naturally take notice of the time he spends on construction and the time wasted in smoking or taking meals, etc. So it is only fair that you allow for yourself only the same concessions as you deem fit for your subordinates. Or, take the case of a person employed at your shop whom you pay for this service. If the man remains away most of the time, doing his own household work and attends to the shop only for a short time at long job--intervals, would you like to give him his full pay? If not, then what excuse can you offer for your own behaviour in respect of your commitments to Allah Ta'ala, Who created you only that you might obey Him constantly. He is your Lord and Creator and showers His blessings on you all the time, but you waste your time in idle pursuits, beguiling yourself with the belief that your performing the Salaat regularly should suffice. Please consider whether you would tolerate such a reply from your servants?

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An instructive incident has been related about this Ayat in a Hadith: A Sahabi (RadhiAllahu anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihe wasallam) sent them on an expedition and advised them to recite this Ayat morning and evening. They kept reciting it and the consequence was that they returned from the expedition, quite safe and sound, after gaining a lot of booty. (Durre-Manthur).

It is sheer mercy and benevolence of Allah Ta'ala that He has not made it obligatory for us to devote all our time to His worship. He has enjoined upon us to devote only a fraction of our time for it. How unjust of us is it that we are negligent of our other duties to Him?

The second question on the Day of Judgement will be, 'How did you spend the vigour of your youth? Was it spent in performing good deeds that win the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, such as prayers or redressing grievances of the oppressed or assisting the weak and disabled ones? Or, did you spend your youthful energy in acts of disobedience, like wasteful and wanton living or wrongdoing and cruelty to the helpless or strengthening the hands of the oppressor or in amassing unlawful wealth or in useless pastimes, which are neither beneficial in this world nor in the Hereafter?' Bear in mind! You will have to appear for reckoning in a Court where no one would dare to plead your case. Nor would lying, deceiving or eloquence avail you. The "secret service" of that Court (the Recording Angels) accompany you at all times. And, besides, the limbs of man's own body, with which he commits misdeeds, will bear testimony to his sins and confess to the crimes:

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ٥

*This Day (The Day of Resurrection) We seal up mouths and the hands speak out and feet bear witness as to what they used to perform. (Yaseen: 65)*

That is to say, hands will speak out and name the persons wronged and mention the misdeeds committed through them. The feet will bear witness to the immoral gatherings which they attended. Allah Ta'ala says, in another context:

وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ أَصْدَانُ الشُّرَىٰ إِلَى الشُّرَىٰ يُوزَعُونَ.....

*And (make mention of) the Day when the enemies of Allah Ta'ala will be gathered together unto the fire. They will be driven on in ranks, till, when they reach it (and the reckoning starts) their ears, their eyes and their skins will testify against them as to what they used to do. And they will say unto their skins and limbs: Why did you testify against us?' These will say 'Allah hath given us speech; He Who giveth speech to all things and Who*



*created you and unto Whom you have to return (after rebirth). (Here Allah admonishes His men). You were not ashamed of your ears and your eyes and your skins testifying against you. (For, obviously nobody can hide his misdeeds from his own limbs). But you deemed that Allah knew not much of what you did. (You used to say to yourselves, "Do what you will. No one can possibly call you in question"). Your notion that you had of your Lord (that He is unaware of your deeds) hath ruined you and you find yourselves (this Day) among those who are utterly lost. (Ha Mim as-Sajdah: 19-23)*

In the Books of Hadith, there are many Traditions on the subject of testimony of the limbs.' A Hadith says: Anas Radhiallaho anho narrates that they were once sitting in company with Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam when he smiled and his blessed teeth became visible. He then asked if they knew why he had smiled. They replied that Allah and His Rasul knew best. He then told them that, on the Day of Judgment, a man will say to his Lord, 'O Allah! Have you not granted me protection against injustice?' Allah Ta'ala will reply, 'certainly'. The man will then say, 'I do not trust any outside witness, concerning myself'. Allah Ta'ala will reply, 'Well, We shall make you a witness to yourself'. His mouth will then be sealed up and the parts of his body will be ordered to speak. They will recount all his deeds and, when he is allowed to speak again, he will say to his limbs, 'May you be cursed and suffer for it! It was for your sake that I indulged in all these things'. (Mishkaat). (That is to say, it is through the limbs that one derives sensual pleasures from sins but, on that Day, these very limbs will become witnesses against themselves. The fact is that the parts of the body will also be helpless as, on that Day, all things will be rendered incapable of telling lies.)

Another Hadith says that, of all the parts of the body, the first to speak out will be the left thigh, which will disclose what misdeeds it was made to commit. All the other limbs will be made to speak afterwards. In short, each part of the body will speak out and recount all the deeds, good or bad, committed by itself. That is why Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam, remarked once, in another Hadith, 'Recite the Kalimah (سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ) 'Allah is beyond all imperfections' and (الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ) (All praise be to Allah) and count them on your fingers for, on the Day of Judgment, the parts of the body will be granted the power to speak and they will have to face questioning'.

This Hadith means that, when these limbs are given the power of speech and they reveal all the sins, they will also recount the many good deeds performed by them. While the hands bear testimony about misdeeds and acts of violence and disobedience, they will also stand witness to the reciting and counting of sacred Names of Allah Ta'ala and the giving of Sadaqat and participating in other good deeds. The subject is too vast to be treated at full length. However, the gist of the matter is that, in youth, one should not be swayed by passions and must guard oneself against wrong-doing, cruelty and other sinful deeds. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam says:

الشَّابُّ شُعْبَةٌ مِنَ الْجُنُونِ وَالنِّسَاءُ حَبَالَةُ الشَّيْطَانِ

*"Youth is a kind of madness and women are the snares of the shaitan".*

That is to say, in the frenzy of youth, one is easily caught in these snares. We listen to these words in every Friday sermon, as they form part of the 'Khutabah'. But, intoxicated by the passions of youth, we never think that we shall be questioned about our youth. We are wasting our youthful energy by spending it on sinful deeds or utilizing it for earning worldly wealth, and do not realize that this boon has been granted to us so that we may spend it in performing such good deeds as are beneficial for the Akhirah. Fortunate are those young people who remain constantly absorbed in striving for the cause of Allah Ta'ala and keep away from sins!

The third question to be asked on the Day of Resurrection (about which the above-mentioned Hadith says that nobody will be allowed to leave his ground until he has answered it), will be about his wealth. He will have to explain whether the sources through which he acquired it were lawful or unlawful. We have touched upon this subject, somewhat briefly, under the preceding Hadith. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam says: "If a man acquires wealth by unlawful means and gives it in alms (Sadaqah), it will not be acceptable, neither will he be blessed in it 'if he spends it on his needs; and if he dies, leaving it behind as inheritance, it will be his provision for Jahannam."

Another Hadith says: "Flesh (of a man's body), which has been nourished with food procured by unlawful means, is more fitting for

Jahannam'." Still another Hadith has been quoted, "If anybody buys a garment for ten Dirhams (silver coins) and among these ten there is one Dirham unlawfully acquired, his Salaat will not be acceptable as long he wears it." (*Mishkaat*)

There are numerous Ahadith of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* which state that: "Do not regard your means of sustenance as something beyond your reach. For, a person will not die until he has received the entire provisions apportioned for him under Divine Decree. So, adopt the best means for earning your livelihood. Procure lawful provisions only, shunning all that is unlawful". It occurs in many Ahadith that a man's sustenance pursues him in the same way as his hour of death. Just as death is inevitable, similarly, everybody's provision, decreed for him by Allah *Ta'ala*, must inevitably reach him. Another Hadith says, "No one, even if he tried, can miss his destined provision, as nobody can escape death". Still another Hadith has it: "The sustenance for everyone has been pre-ordained. If all mankind and the Jinns were to unite and try to deprive him of his provision, they could not do so."

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* says, in a Hadith: "If you possess four qualities, you should not grieve over missing any worldly benefits: trustworthiness, truthful speech, good habits and pure means of livelihood".

There is another Hadith that narrates: 'Blessed is the man whose livelihood is honestly earned, whose heart is pure, whose outward behaviour (observance of rituals, manners' etc.) is noble, and people are safe from the evil in him. Blessed is the man who acts upon his knowledge, who spends all that exceeds his needs for the cause of Allah *Ta'ala*, and who guards his tongue against unnecessary talk.'

It has been narrated in a Hadith that once Sa'd *Radhiallahoho* asked Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* to pray to Allah *Ta'ala* that He might make him 'Mustajaab-ud-Da'waat' (i.e. a pious person whose supplications are fulfilled). Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, 'Make your means of livelihood pure (i.e. do not partake of doubtful things), you will always have your Du'aas (supplications) fulfilled. By Him Who holds the soul of Muhammad in His Hands, a man takes a morsel of Haraam food into his stomach, which renders his forty days' devotion unacceptable to Allah



*Ta'ala*. And a person befits Jahannam if he has been feeding himself with Haraam food.' There are many more Traditions on the subject cited in *Targheeb*. Therefore, one should be very cautious with regard to the sources of one's income. On the face of it, this caution might restrict one's financial gains. But this seeming loss turns out to be very beneficial in the long run, in as much as one is blessed in one's honestly earned money and is also protected from ultimate harm.

The fourth question to be asked from a person on the Day of Resurrection (as mentioned in the Hadith quoted above) will be about the things on which he spent his wealth. As a matter of fact, the very question forms the subject matter of this book. It behoves a man to spend his wealth for the cause of Allah *Ta'ala*. And, the loss of hoarding money is two-fold: one does not make use of it for one's own benefit, and it is left behind as a dead weight. Various other harms of hoarding wealth have been described at the end of chapter two of this book (part one). Obviously, the greater a man's possessions are, the longer will it take him to go through the Reckoning. And the reckoning is to be made on the Day of Resurrection, which would be a terrible Day; everybody will be frightened out of his wits and will be drenched in sweat, owing to intense heat of the Day; he will be out of his senses as if he is drunk, though he will not be actually drunk. Says Allah *Ta'ala* regarding that Day:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۖ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝ يَوْمَ تَرَوُنَّهَا تُذْهِلُ كُلُّ مَرْضِعَةٍ حَمَلًا ۖ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمَلٍ حَمْلَهَا ۖ وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَرَىٰ ۖ وَهُمْ لَا يُعْصَمُونَ ۖ وَلَكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ ۝

'O mankind, fear your Lord. Lo! The earthquake of the Hour (of Doom) is a tremendous thing. On the Day when you behold it, every mother giving suck will forget her suckling baby and every pregnant female shall drop her (unformed) load (in terror); and thou (O Muhammad) will see mankind as drunken, yet they will not (really) be drunken, but the punishment of Allah will be severe (the terror whereof will make them senseless)! (al-Hajj: 1-2)

Allah *Ta'ala* says in another Ayat:

اقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ۝

"Their reckoning draweth closer and closer to mankind. (The Day of Resurrection is rapidly drawing closer to mankind), while they turn away in heedlessness (are least prepared for their reckoning)". (al-Ambiyaa: 1)

A few Rukus later, there is another Verse on the subject:

وَنَضُمُّ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقُسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا فَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ  
خُرْدٍ أَوْ تِينٍ أَوْ زَعْفَرَانٍ ۖ وَكُلٌّ بِنَا حُسْبَيْنٍ ۝

And we set a just balance for the Day of Resurrection, so that no soul is wronged in aught. Though it (good or bad deed) be of the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We will bring it to account. And We suffice for reckoners. (al-Ambiyaa: 47)

And in Surah ar-Ra'd, Allah Ta'ala says: :

لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْمِعُوا بَأْذَنَ اللَّهِ لَوَاقٍ لَهُمْ تَأْنِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ  
مَعَهُ لَا فُتْدَ وَآيَهُ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ نُزُولٌ أَلْوَابٌ ۝

For those who respond to the call of their Lord (fulfil His Commandments) is bliss (in Jannah); but those who do not respond to Him (do not obey Him), even if they had (on the Day of Resurrection) all that is on the earth, and as much more, (in vain) would they proffer it as ransom (to buy their release from the punishment). For them will be a woeful Reckoning. (ar-Ra'd: 18)

There are quite a number of Verses in the Holy Qur'an which contain admonitions regarding the Reckoning to be made on the Day of Resurrection, the severity, the grievousness and the extreme significance of that Day. 'Aishah Radhiallaho anha narrates that once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, 'On the Day of Resurrection, the one who undergoes Reckoning will be ruined (because it will be difficult to render a perfect account of all the deeds).' She then asked whether Allah Ta'ala had not said (in Surah al-Inshiqaaq), 'He will receive an easy Reckoning,' to which Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, 'That (the Reckoning mentioned in the Surah) is just a passing review of the deeds, but those who are subjected to a close examination will perish.'

In another Hadith, 'Aishah *Radhiallaho anha* relates that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* used to say, in the course of his prayers: 'O Allah! grant me an easy Reckoning!, She asked, 'O Rasulullah what is an easy Reckoning, to which he replied:" That one's book of Deeds would be presented and Allah *Ta'ala* would say: 'I forgive you'. As for him who is examined closely, he will surely perish".

Abu Hurairah *Radhiallah anho* reports Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* as saying: 'Whosoever possesses three characteristics will receive an easy Reckoning, Allah *Ta'ala* will bless him and grant him entry into Jannah. Those three characteristics are: bestowing favours upon those who are not kind to you, forgiving those who do you wrong and joining ties of relationship with those who sever relations with you. (*Durre-Manthur*)

It has been narrated in another Hadith that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said: "To everyone of you, Allah *Ta'ala* will speak in such a way that there will be no interpreter between you and Allah *Ta'ala*, nor any concealing veil. He will look to his left and right and see nothing but the deeds( good or bad) he had done in the worldly life; and he will look in front and see nothing but blazing fire of Jahannam. So, protect yourselves from the fire of Jahannam by means of Sadaqah (which is the best protection against the fire of Jahannam), even though it should be with a half date".

In still another Hadith, Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* is reported to have said: "Jannah was shown to me and I saw that those on exalted stations in Jannah were the poor ones among the 'Muhajireen' (the emigrants). There were very few wealthy persons and very few women among the inhabitants in Jannah. I was told that the rich were still going through their accounts at the gates of Jannah, and the women-folk had been held back owing to their love for gold and silver".

A Hadith narrates:"I stood at the doors of Jannah and I saw that the majority of those who entered it were the poor ones, the rich being engaged in reckoning. And I stood at the gates of Jahannam and I saw that the majority of those who entered it were the women-folk." It occurs in another Hadith, that: There are two things which a man fears, but both of them are good for him: he fears death, though death is his protection against trials and temptations; and he fears decrease in wealth, though the less he possesses the lighter the Reckoning (on the Day of Resurrection). (*Targheeb*)



It has been narrated in a Hadith that once Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* was sitting in company with his Sahabah when he said, 'Last night Jannah was shown to me and I saw your ranks in it; he turned to Abu Bakr Siddiq, *Radhiallaho anho* and said 'I saw a person who, to whichever gate of Jannah he went, was welcomed with greetings of 'Marhabaa', 'Marhabaa!' (most welcome). (For each virtuous deed, there is a particular gate in Jannah and the invitation to enter by any gate indicates that he possessed all the virtues par excellence). Salman *Radhiallaho anho* submitted, 'O Rasulullah, such a one must be a very virtuous person, exalted above others (in spiritual stature).'

Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, 'It was Abu Bakr' *Radhiallaho anho*; then he turned to Umar *Radhiallaho anho* and said, 'I saw a palace in Jannah, built with a single brilliant white pearl inlaid with rubies. I asked whose palace it was and I was told that it belonged to a young man of the Quraish tribe. I thought that such a brilliant and magnificent palace must be mine, because I am the Leader of all Rasuls; I was just going to enter the palace when I was told that it belonged to Umar!' Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* then told them about the ranks in Jannah attained variously by Uthman, Ali and many other Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum*. After this, Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* turned to Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf *Radhiallaho anho* and said, 'Of all my Sahabah, you came to join me after much delay and I felt afraid that you might have been undone. When you did come at last, I saw that you were all wet with perspiration. When I asked you why it had taken you so long, you said that you had been busy rendering an account of your numerous belongings. You were questioned as to how you had procured your wealth and how you spent it.' Hearing this, Abdur Rahman *Radhiallaho anho* burst into tears and said 'O Rasulullah, last night I received a caravan of a hundred camels loaded with merchandise. I give all these goods as 'Sadaqah' for distribution among the orphans and poor people of Madinah Munawwarah. I hope that by virtue of this Sadaqah, Allah *Ta'ala* will grant me a lenient Reckoning!' (*Targheeb*)

According to another Hadith, once Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said to Abdur Rahman Ibne 'Auf, 'Abdur Rahman, you are one of the wealthy persons of my Ummah and you will go to Jannah, crawling on your knees (you will not be able to walk straight). Advance loan to Allah *Ta'ala*, so that you could walk easily.' Abdur

Rahman Radhiallaho anho said, 'O Rasulullah what should I lend to my Lord?' Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, 'Give all your wealth as Sadaqah'. At this, Abdur Rahman Radhiallaho anho got up from his seat and went out to fetch all his fortune and present it to Rasulullah who, when he was gone, sent a messenger after him who called him back. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then said to him, 'Jibrael Alaihissalam just came to me with the message that I should advise you to entertain your guests, to feed the poor, to grant the wishes of those who ask your favours and to start with your own relatives. These acts of generosity will suffice to purify you.' (Haakim)

Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf Radhiallaho anho was one of the highly esteemed Sahabah and a man of great merits: he is one of the 'Asharah Mubassharah' (The ten fortunate ones whom Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam gave the glad tidings of Jannah in their lifetime). Besides, he was one of the six eminent Sahabah to whom Umar Radhiallaho anho had, before his martyrdom, assigned the responsibility of choosing his successor, remarking on this occasion, "These are the Sahabah with whom Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam was pleased when he passed away". What is more, it was Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf Radhiallaho anho whose opinion was finally accepted by all the other members and, consequently, Uthman Radhiallaho anho was chosen as the third Khalifah of the Muslims. He is counted among the 'Saabiqoon-al-Awwaloon' (The vanguard of Islam, the first entrants into the Faith) and Allah Ta'ala speaks highly of these favoured ones, thus:

وَالشَّاهِدُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ  
وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ①

The vanguard of Islam, the first to lead the way, of the Muhajireen (the emigrants from Makkah) and the Ansaar (The Muslims of Medinah who welcomed the emigrants and helped them with their wealth and defended them with their lives) and also those who follow them in good deeds—Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him. For them has He prepared gardens underneath which rivers flow wherein they will abide for ever. This is the supreme triumph. (at-Taubah-100)

Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf *Radhiallaho anho* performed Hijra twice. He participated in the Ghazwah of Badr (Battle of Badr) and all the other expeditions led by Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*; even during the times of Rasulullah, he was esteemed as a man of learning and a man of 'Fatwah' (a legist capable of giving verdicts on matters relating to Islamic Law). In some important matters, Umar *Radhiallaho anho* accepted and acted upon his advice. Once Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* was on a journey when he offered 'Fajr Salaat' as a 'Muqtadee' (one who is led in prayers). It so happened that Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* had gone away to relieve himself when the Sahabah, with common consent, chose Abdur Rahman *Radhiallaho anho* as their Imaam. When Rasulullah came back, one Rak'at had already been completed, so Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* joined the congregation (Jama'at) and offered his Salaat as a Muqtadee. During the first year of his Caliphate, Umar *Radhiallaho anho* deputed him as Amir-ul-Hajj on his behalf. (*Isabah*)

In short, despite his numerous merits and virtues, Abdur Rahman bin Auf lagged behind the other Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum*, of his rank, owing to his excessive riches. All this fortune had been bestowed upon him by Allah *Ta'ala*, as a special favour and a kind reward; for, the Traditions relate that he was very poor in the early period of his life.

During the early years after Hijrah, Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* established 'fraternity' among the Muhajireen and the Ansaar, so that the Ansar should help the poor ones among the Muhajireen especially on the grounds of this sacred bondage. Rasulullah established the bond of brotherhood between Abdur Rahman Ibne'Auf and Sa'd bin Ar-Rabi Ansaari. Sa'd *Radhiallaho anho* said to him, "By the Grace of Allah *Ta'ala*, I am the wealthiest person in Madinah Munawwarah. I give you half of my entire property. Besides, I have two wives. I shall divorce anyone of them, you like, and you can marry her after the expiry of the 'Iddat' (mandatory period of waiting, during which a woman may not remarry)". But Abdur Rahman *Radhiallaho anho*, prompted by his magnanimity, replied 'May Allah bless you in your family and your property. I do not want any of these, just show me the way to the market.' Then he went to the market and started doing business. In the evening he had made some profit of condensed dry yoghurt and butter oil. In this way, he was gradually able to save up sufficient money and got married after a few days. (*Bukhari*)



Then a time came when Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* exhorted his Sahabah to give Sadaqah, and Abdur Rahman *Radhi-allaho anho* presented half of his property as Sadaqah. We can have an idea of the extent of his fortune from the foregoing Hadith, which says that he offered hundred camel-loads of merchandise as Sadaqah; and this was just a contingent of his merchandise from Egypt alone. On another occasion, he gave forty thousand Dinars in Sadaqah. On still another occasion, he contributed five hundred horses and five hundred camels for Jihaad and emancipated thirty thousand slaves. Another version of the Hadith says that he emancipated thirty thousand families of slaves. Who knows how many men, women and children there might have been in each such family! (*Mustadrak*)

Once he sold an estate for forty thousand Dinaars and distributed the entire amount among the destitute, the Muhajireen his own relatives and the *Azwaaj-e-Mutahhbraat*; i.e. the wives of Rasulullah. (*Mustadrak*). On his death-bed, Abdur Rehman *Radhi-allaho anho* made a will, leaving four hundred Dinaars as a legacy to each one of those Sahabah *Radhi-allaho anhum* who had participated in Badr. There were one hundred participants of Badr living at that time. (*Isaabah*). He also willed that a garden of his be presented as a gift to the wives of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, which was sold for forty thousand Dinaar. With regard to the expenditure on personal needs, a Tradition says that once he took a bath and sat for dinner and a bowl of 'Thareed' (bread crumbled and mixed with soup, with pieces of meat in it) was brought to him. Seeing this, he began to weep. Someone asked him what made him weep. He replied, 'Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* passed away from this world and he did not have enough barley bread to satisfy his hunger. This prosperity that we witness now does not augur well for us (extracted from *Isaabah*). He meant to say that, if this prosperity had been beneficial for our soul and our ultimate good, it should have been granted to Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*. As all these worldly pleasures were not granted to Rasulullah, they do not seem to be beneficial for us. The least is that a man will have to face Reckoning for his worldly goods.

The fifth question to be asked on the Day of Resurrection (according to the Hadith quoted above) will be how far did one practice the knowledge bestowed by Allah *Ta'ala* on a person. Ignorance about a crime is no excuse and ignorance of law is not accepted as a valid excuse in any court of law. For, it is one's duty to

have knowledge of the law. And, ignorance of the Commandments of Allah *Ta'ala* is in itself a crime and a sin. Therefore, Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "The search for (religious) knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim". Obviously, committing a crime knowingly, in sheer defiance of law, is a far more grievous offence. Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "Keep giving good counsel to one another in the light of the knowledge you possess. For, dishonesty in matters relating to knowledge is worse than dishonesty in financial matters and you will have to account for your knowledge". There are numerous Ahadith to the effect that: 'Whosoever is asked about something he knows and conceals it, a bridle of fire will be thrust into his mouth on the Day of Resurrection'.

Once, Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* delivered a sermon, in the course of which he praised certain tribes. He then said, "What is the matter with the people who do not instruct their neighbouring tribes in Deen, nor give them good counsel; they do not inculcate in them a proper understanding of 'Deen', nor persuade them to do good deeds; nor do they forbid them to do evil deeds? And why is it that some people do not wish to learn (religious) knowledge from their neighbouring tribes, nor do they desire to have a proper understanding, nor do they take counsel from their neighbours. Let those (who are learned) instruct their neighbours in 'Deen,' admonish them and inculcate in them a proper understanding of Deen and let those (who are ignorant) learn all these things from the learned ones. I swear by Allah, if they failed to do so, they would be punished severely even in this world (in addition to the punishment in the Hereafter)". Saying this, Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* got down from the pulpit. People began to talk about the tribes which he meant. Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said that he was referring to the Ash'arites (people of the al-Ash'ari tribes) who were possessed of knowledge and a proper understanding of 'Deen', while the tribes living in their neighbourhood were ignorant of religious knowledge.

When the news reached the Ash'arites, they came to Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* and submitted, "O Rasulullah! we have come to know that you praised certain people but you said such things about us". Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* repeated his words before them: 'Let them instruct their neighbours in 'Deen' admonish them, and inculcate in them a proper understanding of

Deen, persuade them to do good deeds and forbid them to do evil deeds; and let the others learn all these things from the learned ones. If they failed to do so, I should punish them severely even in this world'. They submitted, 'O Rasulullah! How should we inculcate an understanding of 'Deen' in their minds?' Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* again repeated the same words. The tribesmen asked the same question a third time and Rasulullah reiterated the same admonition. Then they submitted, "O Rasulullah, grant us respite for a year", so he granted them a year's time for the education of their neighbours. (*Targheeb & Majma'-uz-Zawaid*)

This Hadith, containing the severe admonition of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, clearly indicates that it is incumbent upon those who possess knowledge and understanding of 'Deen' to educate the ignorant people living in their neighbourhood. It does not absolve them of their responsibility to presume that those who really want it will acquire knowledge, of themselves. True, the ignorant will be questioned about their negligence in learning 'Deen', which is a sin by itself. But it is also the responsibility of those who know to instruct the ignorant in 'Deen'. They should, therefore, make efforts and adopt proper means for the religious education of the people. In doing so, they will be making a practical use of their knowledge. For, man's practice of his own knowledge partly consists of his imparting it to others.

Of the invocations (Du'aas) of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, which have been transmitted through many different chains of narration, the one is quite well-known: 'O Allah! I seek your protection against knowledge that profiteth not'.

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once said: "On the Day of Resurrection a person will be thrown into Jahannam and his entrails will come out of the his body. He will go round his entrails as an ass goes round while turning a mill. The inhabitants of Jahannam will assemble around him and ask him, "What has happened to you? You used to command us to do good deeds and were forbidding the evil deeds." He will say, "I enjoined you to do good deeds, but did not practise them myself".

In another Hadith, Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* is reported to have said: "On the night of Mi'raaj (the Ascension), I saw a group of men whose lips were being clipped with scissors of Fire.



On asking who they were, Jibrael *Alaihissalam* told me that they were those preachers of my Ummah who commanded others to do good deeds but did not do so themselves.'

Still another Hadith narrates that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said: "The Zabaaniyah (the guards of Jahannam) will apprehend the wicked ulama even before apprehending the non-believers. When they say, "How is it that we are being punished even before the non-believers, they will be told thus, 'The learned and the ignorant cannot be treated alike (i.e. you committed all these misdeeds, inspite of the fact that you possessed knowledge of 'Deen". (*Targheeb*). The Zabaaniya are the Angels deputed by Allah *Ta'ala* for casting people into Jahannam. A reference to them occurs in Surah Iqra'. A Hadith has the following narration: Some of the inhabitants of Jannah will visit some in-habitants of Jahannam, and ask them, "What has happened to you that you are here? Indeed we have been granted entry into Jannah by virtue of what we learnt from you". They will reply, 'We did not practise ourselves what we preached to others'.

Maalik bin Dinar reports on the authority of Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihim* that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said: "Whoever delivers a sermon will be questioned by Allah *Ta'ala* on the Day of Resurrection, about the motive behind his sermon (i.e. he will have to explain whether it was meant for gaining worldly advantages-- such as wealth, fame, worldly honour and glory, etc.-- or for winning the pleasure of Allah *Ta'ala*)".

A student of Maalik *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that whenever he related this Hadith, he wept bitterly, so that his voice choked with tears. Then he said, "You think that I take pleasure in giving sermons, though I am aware of the fact that, on the Day of Resurrection, I shall have to explain what motivated my sermons". (*Targheeb*). Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon every 'Alim to deliver sermons (as explained in the foregoing pages). For, it is his responsibility to instruct others in religious knowledge, and there are many Ahadith to that effect (like the Tradition concerning the Ash'arites mentioned above).

Abu Dardaa *Radhiallaho anho* used to say, "What I fear most is that Allah *Ta'ala* should call me on the Day of Resurrection and I should say, 'At your service, my Lord and Sustainer'. Then Allah

*Ta'ala* should command me to explain how far I acted upon my knowledge". In another Hadith, *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* is reported to have said, "The one who would have to suffer the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection would be a learned man (an 'Alim) who did not profit from his knowledge".

*Ammaar bin Yaasir Radhiallaho anho* says: "*Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* sent me to the people of the Qais tribe to instruct them in Deen. I found that they were like wild camels; all the time they were concerned about their camels and goats, taking no heed of anything else. So, I had to come back. *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* asked me, 'What did you do about your errand?' I told him about their condition and their indifference to Deen. *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, 'Ammaar, more astonishing is the condition of the people who possess knowledge and, still, are as heedless towards Deen as these ignorant people'.

It occurs in another Hadith that some people will be cast into Jahannam and their foul and putrid smell will be too disgusting even for the inhabitants of Jahannam. They will ask them, "What misdeeds did you commit, the evil effect whereof has caused you to give off such offensive odours? We were already in untold misery; you have added to our torment". They will reply, "We did not put our knowledge to any use".

*Umar Radhiallaho anho* says, "The person I fear most for in this Ummah is the hypocritical Alim." When someone asked what he meant by a hypocritical 'Alim, he replied, 'One who acts like the ignorant people, but talks like the Ulama". This is to say, a learned man who speaks eloquently but does not practise what he preaches to others is a hypocrite. *Hasan Basri Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Don't be like one who treasures up learning of the scholars and gleans rare wisdom of the sages, but acts like the ignorant fools". *Sufyaan Thauri Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Knowledge calls for action. He who acts upon what he knows is allowed to retain his knowledge, while he who does not act upon it is not entitled to retain it". *Fudhail Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "I feel great pity for three persons: the leader of the people who has been disgraced, a wealthy man reduced to poverty and a learned man ('Alim) who has become a play-thing of people, for his worldly interests."

Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: 'The Ulama are punished when their soul become dead; and death of the soul consists in seeking worldly compensations for acts of virtue, as against the rewards in the Hereafter.' A poet says:

مُجِبُّ لِبَيْتَاعِ الضَّلَالَةِ بِالْهُدَى      وَمَنْ يَشْتَرِي دُنْيَاهُ بِالْإِيمَانِ أَعْجَبُ  
وَأَعْجَبُ مِنْ هَذَيْنِ مَنْ بَاعَ دِينَهُ      بِدُنْيَا سِوَاهُ فَهُوَ مِنْ ذَيْنِ أَعْجَبُ

*'I am astonished at a person who seeks to go astray at the cost of true guidance (Hidaayat); more astonishing is the case of a man who barter away his 'Deen' for a worldly gain. But far more astonishing is the case of a person who barter away his own 'Deen' for the worldly advantage of others (that is to say, he does harm to his own spiritual/religious career for the worldly benefit of other people).*

Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: An Alim who is enamoured of the world is meaner and lower in spiritual status than an ignorant person; he will be punished in the Hereafter more severely. Successful indeed are the Ulama who have been favoured with nearness to Allah *Ta'ala* and who are ever concerned about the Hereafter. There are certain distinguishing signs of such Ulama:

The First and foremost, a true Alim is one who does not try to acquire wealth through his learning. The lowest of rank among the Ulama is one who is fully aware that this material world is despicable, mean, polluted and evanescent; and that the life Hereafter is vast, everlasting and glorious beyond imagination, the bounties whereof are absolutely pure. Besides, every true 'Alim fully understands that this world and the Hereafter are opposed to each other. They are, so to say, like two wives married to one and the same husband: when one is pleased with him, the other is naturally displeased. To give another example, they are like two scales of a balance-when one goes down, the other goes up automatically. Indeed, the present world and the world Hereafter are poles apart. They are like two wives of a person: if you seek to get closer to one, it will be at the expense of the other. And he has not a sane mind who does not realise that this material world has low value and is impure, the pleasures whereof are gained at the cost of hardships in this world and in the Hereafter. It is a common experience that all worldly joys involve taking pains in this world and unavoidable sufferings in the



Hereafter. How can a person of such insane mind become an 'Alim? Furthermore, a person who has no idea of the magnificence of the Hereafter and its everlastingness, is not a true believer. How can such a one become an 'Alim? If a person does not realise that this world and the next have opposing interests and wishes to combine both, he is trying to do something which is undesirable. Such people are infact ignorant of the code of life of all the 'Ambiya' (Apostles) of Allah Ta'ala. And if a person knows all these facts and, still, gives preference to his worldly interests, he is a slave of Shaitaan (Devil), ruined by lusts and facing an evil Fate. Obviously, such a lost soul cannot be counted among the Ulama (divines).

Dawood *Alaihissalam* relates that Allah Ta'ala says: "If an Alim prefers worldly desires to My love, the least I do to him is that I deprive him of the bliss of having communion with Me. (He cannot experience the sublime joys inherent in the Remembrance or 'Zikr' of Allah Ta'ala and in invocations to Him). O Dawood, have no regard for an 'Alim who has been intoxicated by his lust for this material world, for he would lead you astray from My love. Such people are, in reality, deceitful plunderers. O Dawood, if you find someone who really seeks My countenance, be thou a servant to him. O Dawood, if anyone comes to Me running, I record his name as a 'Jahbaz' (a sane wise person) and I do not punish a man who has been recorded as such.'

Yahya bin Mu'aaz *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: When knowledge and wisdom are employed for gaining worldly advantages, these are divested of lustre and glory.' Sa'eed bin al-Musayyab *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: 'If you find an 'Alim associating with the princes, he must be a dishonest impostor.'

Umar *Radhiallah anho* says: "If you find an Alim enamoured of this material world, he must be blameworthy in religious matters, for everybody occupies himself with things which are dear to him."

Someone asked a divine "Can anyone who takes pleasure in sinful deeds become an 'Arif' (a pious being with intimate knowledge) of his Lord"? The divine replied, "I can say, without hesitation, that no one who prefers this world to the next, can be an 'Arif, relishing sins is a far greater evil!" It should also be borne in mind that no Alim can be regarded as one concerned about the Hereafter merely for his rejection of worldly wealth, unless he also has no ambition for

worldly honour or status. For, these ambitions are more harmful to the soul than the lust for wealth.

The Second distinguishing characteristic of a true 'Alim' is that there should be no contradiction between his knowledge and his practice of 'Deen'. That is to say, he should, of necessity, practice what he preaches to others. Allah Ta'ala says:

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ

*Do you enjoin righteousness upon mankind while you yourselves forget (to practise) it? And you recite the scriptures. (al-Baqarah: 44)*

And, in another context:

كَبُرَ مَقَاعِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

*'It is most hateful in the sight of Allah that you say what you practice not'. (as-Saff: 3)*

Haatam Asamm Rahmatullah alaihe says: "On the day of Resurrection, none will be more grieved than an 'Alim who imparted knowledge to others, which they acted upon and were granted eternal success, while he himself did not act upon his knowledge and, therefore, failed miserably". Ibne Simaak Rahmatullah alaihe says: "There are many who enjoin 'Zikr' (Remembrance of Allah) upon others, but do not remember Him themselves; they admonish others to fear Allah, but they themselves disobey Him most audaciously; they persuade others to cultivate proximity with Allah, but are remote from Him themselves; they invite others unto Allah, but themselves flee from Him".

Abdur Rahman Ibne Ghanam Rahmatullah alaihe says that ten Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum related to him the Hadith: "We were once sitting in the Masjid Quba and learning (religious) knowledge when Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam came and said to us, 'Acquire as much knowledge as you will but Allah Ta'ala will not reward you unless you act upon what you know.'"

The third distinguishing characteristic of a true 'Alim' is that he is always concerned with such branches of knowledge as are

beneficial for the Hereafter and which exhort one to perform good deeds. He is least interested in that branch of knowledge which has little or no use for the Akhirah. The fact is that it is unwise to regard these as true 'Ilm' or learning. It is sheer ignorance to regard oneself as an 'Alim simply because one is possessed of worldly knowledge; the pity is that such a person is not particular about learning religious knowledge. An illiterate person, on the other hand, is unconscious of his ignorance and, therefore, tries to acquire religious knowledge. Great indeed is the spiritual loss of a man who believes himself to be an 'Alim though he is steeped in (sheer) ignorance.

Haatam Asamm *Rahmatullah alaihe* was a renowned Sufi and a favourite pupil of Shaiq Balkhi *Rahmatullah alaihe*. Once the Sheikh asked him, "Haatam, how long have you been here, in company with me?" He replied, "Thirty-three years". The Sheikh said, "What did you learn during these thirty-three years of association with me?" Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* replied, "I have learnt eight lessons". At this, Shaiq *Rahmatullah alaihe* out of sheer disappointment recited:

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ۝

'Lo! We are Allah's and lo! unto Him we are returning'.

He said regretfully, "You learnt only eight lessons during long years of association with me? I have wasted all my life in associating with you". Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* submitted most respectfully, "I have learnt only eight lessons: I cannot lie to you". The Sheikh said, "Tell me, what are those eight lessons?" Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* answered thus:

(a) 'I have found that everybody loves someone or something (wife children, property, friends, etc.), but I know that, as soon as he is laid in the grave, the loved ones part company with him. Consequently, I have cultivated love for good deeds so that, when I die and pass into the grave, my loved ones should also accompany me into the grave and I should not be left alone.' Shaiq *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, 'You have done well'.

(b) I have read in the Holy Qur'an that Allah Ta'ala says:

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَلَعَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۖ فَيَٰئِذَا الْجَنَّةُ مِنَ السَّوْءِ ۖ



*'But as for him who feared (in this world) to stand before his Lord (in the Hereafter) and restrained himself from (unlawful indulgence in) lust, Lo! Jannah will be his home'. (an-Naaziaat: 40-41).*

I know that whatever Allah Ta'ala says is true. Therefore, I have restrained myself from worldly desires and I have become steadfast in devotion to Him.

(c) I know that, in this world, things which are dearest and most precious to men are preserved with great care and protected with diligence. Then I read in the Holy Qur'an that Allah Ta'ala says:

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

*That which you have (in the world) wasteth away (either you will die and leave it behind or it will be wasted away in your life; it is all one to you); and that which Allah has, remains (eternally). (an-Nahl: 96)*

Accordingly, whenever I came by something which was of great value to me, or which I prized above other things, I consigned it to the custody of Allah (spent it for the cause of Allah Ta'ala), so that it should be preserved for ever.

(d) I have observed that, for honour and glory, all men turn to wealth, nobility of parentage and other things of pride. That is, they take pride in wealth, high parentage, etc., and assert their superiority over others. But I have read in the Holy Qur'an that Allah Ta'ala says:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

*'Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in piety.' (al-Hujurat: 13)*

I, therefore, have cultivated piety in myself, so that I should become the noblest of men in the sight of Allah Ta'ala.

(e) I have noticed that people upbraid others, revile them or find fault with them out of jealousy. Then, I read in the Holy Qur'an that Allah Ta'ala says:

مَنْ قَسَمَ ابْنَتُهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ

بَعْضًا مَخْرُوجًا

*We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of the world, and (in this apportionment) we have raised some of them above others in rank, (so) that some of them (should) take labour from others. (az-Zukhruf: 32)*

(That is to say, if all men were alike and equal in rank, no one would work for others or serve anybody and, consequently, there would be disorder and chaos in the affairs of the world).

Therefore, I have restrained myself from jealousy and ceased to concern myself with other people's affairs. I know for certain that the distribution of livelihood is entirely in the hands of Allah Ta'ala and He grants as much as He pleases to whomsoever He likes. I, therefore, ceased to harbour enmity against anyone, realising that a man's personal effort has little to do with his prosperity or adversity. It has rather been foreordained by Allah Ta'ala, Who is the Sovereign Lord of the worlds. So, I do not feel angry with anyone.

(f) I have observed that, in this world, everybody is hostile to someone or the other. I have considered this in the light of what Allah Ta'ala says in the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا

*Lo! Shaitan (the devil) is an enemy for you, so treat him as an enemy (Do not be friends with him). (at-Fatir: 6)*

So, I have directed all my hostilities against Shaitan alone and I always try to keep away from him, by all possible means. And, as Allah Ta'ala has commanded us to treat him as an enemy, I bear no enmity against anyone other than Shaitan.

(g) I have observed that all people are struggling hard to seek their livelihood, so much so that they disgrace or abase themselves before others and adopt unlawful means for procuring their daily bread. But I have read in the Holy Qur'an that Allah Ta'ala says:

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

*And there is no living being that moves on earth, but his sustenance depends on Allah Ta'ala. (Hood: 6)*

Considering that I am also one of the creatures (that move on earth) whose sustenances depends upon Allah Ta'ala. I occupied

myself with paying what I owe to Allah Ta'ala and ceased to worry about what Allah Ta'ala has taken the responsibility to provide.

(h) I have observed that all men have faith upon and put their trust in things which have themselves been created by Allah Ta'ala. Some have faith in their estates or business concerns, others in their own skill or craftsmanship, and there are still others who trust their own physical power and energy. In short, all people have put their trust in things which have been created by Allah Ta'ala, like themselves. I have read in the Holy Qur'an that Allah Ta'ala says:

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

'And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him'. (at-Talaaq: 3)

Therefore, I have put my trust and faith in Him alone.

Shaqiq *Rahmatullah alaihe* thereupon said, 'Haatam, may Allah bless you with 'Taufiq' (Divine aid for performance for good deeds)! I have viewed the teachings of the Torah, the Injeel, the Zabur and the Holy Qur'an, and I believe that these eight moral lessons form a gist of all that is really good and beneficial for man. Therefore, anyone acting upon these precepts will be deemed to have practised the learning contained in all the four Scriptures revealed by Allah Ta'ala'. The fact is that such a learning can only be attained by those Ulama who are really concerned about the Hereafter. These truths lie too deep for those (so-called) Ulama who are ambitious for material wealth and who hanker after worldly honour and recognition.

The Fourth Distinguishing characteristic is that such Ulama are least interested in the elegance of dress or delicacies of food. Such an Alim should, rather, exercise moderation in these matters, and follow the example of his seniors. He should bear in mind that simplicity, in dress and food, will be helpful to him to advance in nearness to Allah Ta'ala and place him at a high rank among the 'Ulama-e-Aakhirat' (The divines concerned about the Hereafter alone).

Quite relevant here is an amazing episode about Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* narrated by one of his pupils, Abu Abdullah Khawas *Rahmatullah alaihe*. He relates, "Once, we were with our sheikh in a



village called 'Raye'. There were three hundred and twenty persons with us and we were all going for Hajj. We were a 'Jama'at (group) of 'Mutawakkeleen' and we had no provisions or any kind of equipment but had faith in Allah to look after our needs. In the village, we came across an ordinary businessman who, though he looked rather a dry sort of person, invited the entire group to dinner and we stayed there for the night.

Next morning he said to Abu Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* that he was going to enquire after the health of an Alim who was ill, and that the Sheikh could accompany him if he liked. Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, 'Very well, I would be pleased to accompany you; it is a blessed deed to enquire after an ailing person and visiting an Alim is an act of devotion'. This Alim was Sheikh Muhammad bin Muqaatil, the Qadhi of that village. When Abu Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* reached his house and saw its magnificence, he was lost in thought. He exclaimed to himself, 'Allah-o-Akbar! An Alim living in such a grand house!' 'Anyhow, we requested entry and walked in. We saw that its interior was most magnificent, neat, clean and spacious, with curtains hanging all round. Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* gazed upon all these things in amazement. Soon we reached the Qadhi's room, who was lying in a fine, soft, fluffy bed. A slave-boy stood above at his head, fanning him. The businessman greeted him by saying, 'Assalaam-o-Alaikum', sat beside him and enquired about his health. But Haatam kept standing. The Qadhi motioned him to sit down, but the Sheikh refused to take a seat. The Qadhi said, "Have you got anything to say?" The shiekh said, "I want to ask you about a religious matter". The Qadhi said, "Well what is it?" Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, 'Would you mind sitting up in bed?' At this, the servants helped him (because he was too weak) and the Qadhi sat up in bed. After this, the following conversation took place:

Haatam: From whom did you acquire your knowledge?

Qadhi: I learnt it from the trustworthy Ulama!

Haatam: 'Who transmitted it to the Ulama?'

Qadhi: 'The Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* transmitted it to them'.

Haatam: Who imparted it to the Sahabah?

Qadhi: 'Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* imparted it to them.

Haatam: 'Who conveyed it to Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*.

- Qadhi: 'Jibra'il *Alaihissalam* conveyed it to him.
- Haatam: Who revealed it to Jibra'il *Alaihissalam*?
- Qadhi: 'Allah *Ta'ala*, Jalla Shanohu, revealed it to him'.
- Haatam: 'Is there any indication, in the entire body of knowledge revealed by Allah *Ta'ala* to Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* through Jibra'il *Alaihissalam* and transmitted to you through the Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* and the trustworthy Ulama, to the effect that the more splendid a man's house the more exalted he is in the sight of Allah *Ta'ala*?
- Qadhi: There is no such indication in that knowledge .
- Haatam: If not, what occurs in that body of knowledge (in this regard)?
- Qadhi: It occurs that, in the sight of Allah *Ta'ala*, only those are exalted to positions of honour who abstain from the worldly joys, concern themselves with the Hereafter, love the humble and the poor ones, and spend for the cause of Allah, thereby treasuring up their charities with Allah *Ta'ala*, for the Hereafter .
- Haatam: Then, whose example are you following? Are you following the Sunnah of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*? Are you imitating the Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* and the trustworthy Ulama (divines)? Or, are you following in the footsteps of Fir'aun and Namrud? 'O wicked scholars of Islam! The ignorant worldlings say, when they notice men like you, 'If such is the plight of the Ulama, we cannot be blamed for being in a similar condition .

Saying this, Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* went away. This severe admonition had a bad effect on the Qadhi's health and he grew worse. It was rumoured that the sheikh had been severe with the Qadhi. Someone said to Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe*, "Tanafasi, another Alim who lives in Qazween, a city situated at a distance of eighty-one miles from Raye, is leading a far more luxurious life". So, Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* set out on a journey to Qazween, with a view to admonishing him. On reaching there, he said to Tanafasi, "I am a man from a non-Arab country. I beseech you to instruct me in 'Deen', beginning with its rudiments. That is, I would like you to demonstrate to me how Wudhu (ablution) is performed, for, Wudhu is the key to Salaat". Tanafasi said, "With great pleasure", and asked someone to fetch water. He then performed Wudhu before the Sheikh to show him how it is performed.

Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, 'Allow me to perform Wudhu before you, so that I may learn it properly. At this, Tanafasi got up and the Sheikh sat in his place. He began to perform Wudhu and washed his hands four times. Tanafasi said, "This is 'Israaf' (extravagance); you should wash every limb thrice only.' Whereupon Haatam said 'Subhan-Allahil-'Azeem ! (Allah, the Most High is beyond all imperfections!) It is extravagant of me to use a little extra water for Wudhu, but is it not extravagant of you to make use of all these accessories and accoutrements that you possess?' Then, of course, Tanafasi realised that Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* had not come to learn, but to admonish him.

After this, Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* went to Baghdad. When Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal *Rahmatullah alaihe* learnt about him and his affairs, he came to see the Sheikh. The Imaam asked him, "How can one be safe from the taint of the world?" Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* replied, "You cannot protect yourself from the evil influence of the world unless you possess four qualities":

- (i) You should forgive the people who behave towards you rudely or stupidly.
- (ii) You should not behave towards them in the same manner.
- (iii) You should spend on others whatever you have.
- (iv) You should not feel greedy for what other people possess.

Later, when Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* reached Madinah Munawwarah and people heard of him, they came to see him and gathered round him. He said, 'What city is this?' People said, 'It is the city of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*'. Haatam said, "Which is the palace of Rasulullah? I would like to pray two Raka'ats in his palace". They said that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* had not lived in a palace, but in a humble low-roofed house. Haatam *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "Show me then the palaces of the Sahabah *Radhiyallahu anhum*". The people said, "The Sahabah *Radhiyallahu anhum* also had no palaces to live in; they lived in small houses with low roofs a little above the ground". Haatam said, "Then, this must be the city of Fir'aun". The remark gave offence to the people who seized the Sheikh and presented him before the 'Ameer' (governor) of Madinah. For, they thought, he was guilty of sacrilege in calling Madinah Munawwarah the city of Fir'aun. When the 'Ameer' (governor) demanded an explanation, Haatam said, 'Don't be in such a hurry. Listen to what I say till I have finished. I come from a non-Arabic country. When I entered this city, I asked what city it was



and they said that it was the city of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. The Sheikh then repeated the entire conversation that had passed between him and the people of Madinah and thereafter recited the following Ayat from the Holy Qur'an:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

*Verily you have, in Rasul of Allah, a good example for him whose hope is in Allah and who fears the Last Day, and who engages much in the remembrance of Allah (i.e. for him who is a perfect 'Mo'min' (believer) . (al-Ahzaab: 21)*

The Ayat means that, in all circumstances, one should follow the example of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam. Afterwards, he said, 'Allah Ta'ala commands us to follow in the footsteps of Rasulullah. Now tell me whether you are following the Sunnah of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam or the ways for Fir'aun.' At this, the people released him.

In this connection, it is worthy of note that it is not forbidden to enjoy things that are 'Mubaah' (permissible) according to Shariah, nor is it unlawful to have an abundance of such things in one's possession. However, the affluence of such luxuries creates a strong liking for them, to such an extent that it becomes difficult to do without them. Consequently, one has to busy himself in providing these things for oneself, and in increasing one's means of income. And, whosoever devotes himself to increase his wealth, often adopts a compromising attitude towards his religion. What is worse, such people often commit sinful deeds. If it had been easy to involve oneself in worldly affairs without getting contaminated, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam would not have so seriously admonished his Ummah to abstain from absorption in worldly pursuits, nor would he have been so particular personally about avoiding worldly taint to the extent that he refused to wear an embroidered gown.

In a letter to Imaam Maalik Rahmatullah alaihe, Yahya bin Yazid Naufali Rahmatullah alaihe wrote, after praising Allah Ta'ala and invoking His Choicest Blessings on Rasulullah: 'I have come to know that you put on fine clothes, take fine bread and sleep in a soft bed. You have also appointed a door-man at your house. All this looks odd, considering that you are one of the great and renowned Ulama and people come to you from far off places, for learning religious knowledge. You are our Imaam (leader) and

preceptor and people follow your example. I suggest that you should be very cautious in these matters. I am submitting these lines merely as a sign of my sincerest regards for you and no one except Allah Ta'ala knows about this letter. The end. Assalaam-o-Alaikum.'

In reply to this letter, Imaam Maalik *Rahmatullah alaihe* wrote: 'I received your letter, which contained much advice and admonition for me, besides being a sign of your kindest regard for me. May Allah bless you with piety and righteousness! May Allah grant you best rewards for this advice! May Allah grant me 'Taufeeq' (Divine aid) to act upon your advice! Indeed, nobody can perform good deeds or protect himself against bad deeds without help and favour from Allah Ta'ala; what you have heard of me is true. I am in the habit of using all these things. May Allah grant me forgiveness! However, all these things are allowable under 'Shariah' (Islamic Law). Allah Ta'ala says:

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ

*Say: Who has forbidden the adornments of Allah (clothes, etc) which He has brought forth for His servants and the good and pure things (food and drinks) that He has provided for sustenance? (al-A'raf: 32)*

'I am fully aware that, notwithstanding their permissibility, it is far better not to make use of these adornments. I should hope that, in future, you would be kind enough to write to me from time to time. I shall also continue to write letters to you. 'With regards'. (Assalaam-o-Alaikum)!

Imaam Maalik *Rahmatullah alaihe* has made a very subtle point. He has given a legal opinion (Fatwa) about the religious permissibility for the use of good things of life and, at the same time, admitted that it is better to abstain from them.

The Fifth distinguishing trait of the Ulama who are concerned about the hereafter is that they keep away from the company of the princes, lords and rulers, and do not associate with them unless it becomes unavoidable. The Ulama should rather avoid their company, even if the princes come to visit them, of themselves. For, their companionship may involve seeking their pleasure and winning their goodwill. Besides, the princes often indulge in cruelty, injustice

and other sinful deeds. And, it is incumbent upon an 'Alim to forbid them to do evil deeds, to expose their injustice or cruelty, and to admonish them against transgressing the Commandments of Allah Ta'ala. Observing reticence in such matters (instead of voicing one's disapproval) amounts to compromising one's religion. Furthermore, if one is obliged to praise the princes and lords, with a view to winning their favours, it amounts to telling lies. And, if one feels greedy and inwardly inclined towards what they possess of material wealth, it is covetousness forbidden by Law (Shariah). In short, associating with the princes leads on to many forms of evil practices. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said that whosoever lives in the jungle becomes hard-hearted; one who is fond of hunting becomes neglectful (of everything else); and one who visits the kings frequently falls into temptations!

Huzaifah Radhiallaho anho said: "Beware of the seats of temptation!" On being asked what the seats of temptation were, he said, "The house-doors of the princes and lords. For, whosoever visits them will have to approve of their misdeeds and (by way of praise) he will have to attribute to them such qualities as they do not possess!

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said that the worst among the Ulama are those who visit the princes and lords and the best among the rulers are those who visit the Ulama.

Samnoon Rahmatullah alaihe, one of the companions of Sirri Saqati Rahmatullah alaihe, narrates that if you hear about an 'Alim as being enamoured of the world, consider him at fault in his religion'. I experienced it myself. Whenever I went to see the king and, on coming back, looked within my heart, I found the ill-effects of the visit effecting my soul, in spite of the fact that I talk to the kings with severity, contradict their views sternly and do not partake of anything that belongs to them, to the extent that I abstain from even drinking plain water, so long as I am with the king. Our worldly-minded Ulama are worse than the Divines of Banu Israeel. For they go to the rulers and tell them how to evade the Law (Shariah) and, thereby, seek to win their favours. If the Ulama were to tell the rulers about their responsibilities in plain words, they would never like them (the Ulama) to visit their courts frequently, but their truthfulness will be a means of eternal salvation in the sight of Allah Ta'ala. Indeed, the Ulama's visits to the princes' courts expose them



(the Ulama) to temptations and help the Shaitan in leading them astray. Especially those who can speak eloquently fall an easy prey to the evil promptings of the Shaitan, who whispers into their ears: Your visiting the princes is good for them. For, they will be reformed by your speech and you will be saving them from falling into tyranny and injustice. And, it will also be helpful for preserving the 'Sha'aair' of Islam (Institutions like Salaat, Jihaad, etc., which serve as symbols of religion). Consequently, such people are led to the belief that visiting the Sultans is also an act of virtue--though the fact is that, if one visits them, one will have to compromise one's Deen and one will become obliged to praise them, which is fatal to one's Deen.

In a letter to Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe*, Umar Bin Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe* wrote: Please send me the names and addresses of suitable persons whom I should ask to assist me in the affairs of Khilafat (Caliphate). Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* replied: "Pious people will not come to you and you will not select the worldly people. And, of course, the greedy and avaricious persons should not be entrusted with such tasks, for they would corrupt the affairs of the government. So I suggest that you should employ persons of noble descent, because their sense of honour will not allow them to tarnish their inherited nobility by dishonest deeds". Just imagine! This was the reply sent by Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* to Umar bin Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe* who is renowned for his excellent qualities of piety, equity and justice, so much so that he is surnamed as a 'Second Umar' (for his similarities with Umar bin Khattab *Radhiallaho anho*, the second Khalifah of Islam).

This view is held by Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe*, but this humble author (Sheikh Muhammad Zakariyya *Rahmatullah alaihe*) is of the view that unless it becomes necessary to decline such offers for religious reasons, there is no harm in accepting the responsibility (to assist the Khalifah) in affairs of the Caliphate, provided that one is watchful and capable of protecting oneself (against temptations). Rather, sometimes, it becomes imperative to accept such responsibilities in the interest of 'Deen' (religion) or because necessity demands it. However, it is very important that one should not accept such tasks for personal motives, personal interests, material gains or worldly honour and glory. One should, instead, keep in view the needs of the Muslim community. Says Allah Ta'ala:

وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ

*And Allah Ta'ala knows him who spoils (does not try to improve the lot of the people) from him who improves (the lot of the Muslims). (al-Baqarah: 220)*

The Sixth distinguishing sign of the virtuous Ulama is that they do not take hasty decisions when giving verdicts in religious law (Fatwas) and are very careful in giving advice on religious matters. As far as possible, they refer the cases to someone else whom they consider to be capable of giving such decisions.

Abu Hafs Naishapuri *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, 'A true Alim is one who, while giving an opinion in religious matters, is afraid and thinks that he will have to explain, on the Day of Resurrection, as to the authority on which he had given a decision in such and such cases'.

Some of the Ulama have said that the Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* were reluctant to accept four responsibilities:

1. The office of an Imaam (one who leads the obligatory prayers).
2. The guardianship of a deceased person (i.e. the responsibility to distribute his property according to the will made by him).
3. Accepting a trust.
4. Giving decisions (Fatwaas) in religious matters.

And their five great interests in life were: (1) Reciting the Holy Qur'an. (2) Frequent stay in Masjids; (3) Remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. (4) Enjoining what is good; and (5) Forbidding the evil.

Ibne Husain *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: 'Some people hurriedly pronounce a decision (Fatwa) of religious law in such important matters about which, if they had been presented to Umar *Radhi-allaho anho*, he would not have given his decision without gathering together and consulting all the leading Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* who had participated in the Badr expedition.'

Anas *Radhiallaho anho* was one of the illustrious Sahabah who had the privilege to have served Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* for ten years; still, whenever he was asked to give his opinion about an issue, he would refer it to Hasan Basri *Rahmat-ullah alaihe* who was a Tabi'ee but a renowned mystic and a celebrated scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh).

Similarly, Ibne Abbas *Radhiallaho anho*, who was an illustrious Sahabi surnamed 'Raees-ul-Mufasssireen' (the 'Foremost among the interpreters of the Holy Qur'an) would direct the people to solicit the opinion of Jaabir bin Zaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* who was a Tabi'ee, well versed in giving religious law-decisions (Fatwas). While Abdullah Ibne Umar *Radhiallaho anho*, himself an illustrious Sahabi and a profound scholar of Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh) referred cases to Saeed Ibne-al Musayyab *Rahmatullah alaihe*, a Tabi ee.

**The Seventh** distinguishing characteristic of the true Ulama is that they are seriously interested in the deeper aspects of religious knowledge which relate to Suluk (i.e. initiation in the Paths to Ultimate Truth). They are constantly engaged in the struggle to reform and purify their own souls, realizing that reforming one's inner self helps one in gaining deeper understanding of the formal aspects of knowledge. Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said "Whosoever acts upon his knowledge, Allah *Ta'ala* will grant him knowledge of things which he has not acquired."

It occurs in the Scriptures of the former Rasuls *Alaihimussalam*: "O Children of Israel! Say not! knowledge lies in the skies above; who can make it descend upon us? Nor should you say: 'Knowledge lies in the bowels of the earth, too deep for us to dig out'. Nor say: 'knowledge lies across the seas too far away for us to reach it'. No! The fountains of knowledge spring from within your own hearts. If you remain in My presence, observing proper etiquette in the manner of great spiritual beings and cultivate the pious manners of the voracious believers (Siddiqueen), I shall cause the fountains of knowledge to spring forth from your hearts. So much so, that you will be overwhelmed by knowledge." Experience shows that the pious beings who have attained nearness to Allah *Ta'ala* are granted access to such subtleties and profundities of knowledge as lie beyond the reach of an ordinary scholar depending only on books.

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* says that Allah *Ta'ala* has said: 'No means whereby My servant seeks My Favour are more pleasing to Me than the observance of *Faraaidh* (obligatory rites) (such as Salaat, Zakaat, Fasting, Hajj or Pilgrimage etc.). That is to say, no other means of seeking nearness to Allah *Ta'ala* can compare with the proper performance of 'Faraaidh' (Obligatory duties). And, My servant ceases not to seek nearness to Me by *Nafl* (optional



practices of Salaat, Sadaqaat, etc) until I make him My favourite, and when I make him My favourite, I become his ears wherewith he hears, his eyes wherewith he sees, and his hands wherewith he holds, and his feet wherewith he walks. And, if he asks Me for something, I fulfil his desire, or if he seeks refuge against anything, I grant him refuge'. (*Bukhari*)

(This Hadith means that, when a man becomes a favourite of Allah *Ta'ala*, he fully submits to the will of Allah *Ta'ala* in his walking, seeing and hearing, and in each and everything he does.) Some other versions of the Hadith add: 'Whosoever despises or bears enmity against anyone of my friends (favourites) has declared war against Me'.

Since the great saints are the Favourites of Allah *Ta'ala*, they are constantly and whole-heartedly engaged in contemplation, meditation and remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala*, and thus the subtle and deeper meanings of the Holy Qur'an are revealed unto them, and the divine mysteries are made manifest to their souls. Especially, the hearts of those who always remain absorbed in remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala* are inspired with the deeper significance of the Qur'anic Ayaat. Everyone can acquire spiritual knowledge with Divine Aid (*Taufeeq*) from Allah *Ta'ala*, the portion of his knowledge being commensurate with his concern for good actions and his diligence in devotions.

In a comprehensive Hadith quoted by Ibne Qayyim *Rahmatullah alaihe* in his book, 'Miftaaho Darris Sa'adah' and by Abu Na'eem *Rahmatullah alaihe* in his book, 'Hilyah', Ali *Radhiallaho anho* is reported to have given the following thorough account of the qualities of the Ulama who are concerned only about the Hereafter:-

Human hearts are like vessels and the best hearts are those which are containers of all that is good; it is better to preserve knowledge than to accumulate wealth. For, knowledge gives you protection while wealth needs protection by you; knowledge increases by use while wealth decreases by spending. The benefits of wealth do not remain after it has been spent, but the benefits of learning are eternal (people continue to benefit from the sayings of a learned man even after his death)

He then heaved a deep sigh and added, 'Within my bosom, I hold true knowledge; I wish I could find people who would be cap-

able of receiving this knowledge. It is a pity that either I find men who employ religious pursuits for amassing wealth, or I find people who indulge in sensual pleasures, and are after amassing worldly wealth\* (For the sake of brevity, I have quoted here a few sentences from a detailed discourse on the subject).

**The eighth** distinguishing characteristic of the virtuous Ulama is that their faith in Allah *Ta'ala* Shanohu is ever-increasing. Such Ulama are deeply concerned about their Imaan and Yaqeen, because they are fully aware that an unshakable faith and belief in Allah *Ta'ala* is the most valuable asset for a Mo'min.

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said: "Perfect faith is nothing but true belief!" And also said, "Learn how to believe truly". The Hadith means that one should be very particular about associating with the people who possess a strong belief and should try to follow their example so that, by virtue of their blessed companionship, one can attain perfect faith.

A true 'Alim should have perfect belief in the Absolute Power of Allah *Ta'ala* and His Attributes, just like his belief in the existence of the sun and the moon. He should have a perfect belief that Allah *Ta'ala* Alone is the Doer of all thing, all the various material means are under His sole control and He employs these means as He wills. All material things are as helpless in His Hands as a stick in the hands of a person who beats someone with it, but nobody holds the stick to be responsible for it. When this belief gets firmly rooted in the heart, it will become easy for him to cultivate the qualities of 'Tawakkul' (trusting in Allah alone), 'Ridhaa' (Willing acceptance of what has been decreed by Allah *Ta'ala*) and 'Tasleem' (Submission to the Supreme Will of Allah *Ta'ala*).

A true 'Alim should also have perfect belief that Allah *Ta'ala* has the responsibility to provide sustenance for all living things. Every creature must get what is his lot; similarly, no one can get what has not been ordained for him. When this belief becomes firm, one will exercise moderation in the struggle to earn one's livelihood. Such a belief checks greed and avarice and one does not feel grieved if one has failed to achieve something.

A true 'Alim should also have firm belief that Allah *Ta'ala* is watching all our deeds, good or bad, at all times, that he knows even

an insignificant good or evil deed and that man will get reward or punishment due for it. He should strongly believe that all virtues are rewarded, just as he believes that eating bread satisfies one's hunger. Similarly, he should believe that evil has consequences for certain, just like snake-bite. In short, he should be attracted by good deeds, as a hungry person is by food. And, he should feel afraid of sins just as he is scared of a snake or a scorpion.

The ninth distinguishing characteristic of the virtuous Ulama is that, under all conditions, they should wear a true expression of being inspired with fear of Allah *Ta'ala*: it should be manifest from every gesture they make, from the style of their dress, from their personal habits, from their speech and even from their silence. A mere look at such an 'Alim's face will inspire you with the remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala*. He is calm and serene, noble and dignified, humble and modest. He abstains from idle or meaningless talk and his manner of speaking is natural and unassuming. For, artificial and unnatural style of speech is born of pride and haughtiness, and indicates lack of fear of Allah *Ta'ala*. Says Umar *Radhiyallahu anho*: "Acquire knowledge along with proper poise and dignity; behave respectfully towards those who impart knowledge to you, and do not earn the reputation of being hard-hearted".

Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* says: "The best of my Ummah are those who, in public life, look happy thinking of the infinite mercy of Allah *Ta'ala* but, in private weep and cry for fear of His punishment. They are bodily on earth, but their hearts are absorbed in thinking of heavenly matters". Someone asked Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, "Which is the best virtue?" He replied, "Abstaining from what is unlawful and keeping your tongue occupied forever with Zikr of Allah *Ta'ala*." Someone asked, "Who is the best companion?" He replied, "He who warns you for negligence in good deeds and aids you in performing them". Someone asked, "Who is a bad companion?" Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* replied, "The one who does not warn you when you are negligent in your good actions, nor helps you when you want to do them." Someone asked, "Who is the greatest 'Alim'?" He replied, "The one who lives in greatest awe of Allah *Ta'ala*." Someone asked, "With whom should we associate most frequently?" He replied, "Those who inspire you with 'Zikr' of Allah *Ta'ala*".



Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said: "The care-free person, in the life Hereafter, will be the one who remained concerned in this life; the happiest person, in the Hereafter, will be he who wept most in this life (for fear of Allah *Ta'ala*)".

The tenth distinguishing feature of the virtuous Ulama is that they are more concerned about those regulations of Islamic Law which pertain to religious practices and to what is lawful and unlawful. That is to say, they are interested in actions that it is obligatory to perform and are very keen to know things which it is necessary to avoid. Similarly, they are very particular in learning about things which may undo any virtue, for example, things which make Salaat invalid, the virtues of using a 'Miswak' (a twig used as a tooth-brush), etc. And, they do not indulge in discussions relating to abstruse branches of knowledge for the sake of being regarded as a sage, a profound scholar or a great philosopher.

The eleventh distinguishing characteristic of a virtuous Alim is that he has studied, with deep insight, various branches of knowledge; he does not blindly accept the opinions of others. For, we are bound to follow Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* and seek guidance from his sayings alone. We follow the Sahabah *Radhi-allaho anhum* simply because they closely observed and followed the ways of Rasulullah. And, since following the Sunnah of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* is of fundamental value, a true 'Alim should be very particular about collecting the Ahadith of Rasulullah and should make them the object of his serious consideration.

The twelfth distinguishing feature of the virtuous Ulama is that they are particularly strict in their avoidance of innovations 'Bid'aat' in Deen. If something becomes a common practice, it does not follow that the thing is a truly religious practice. For, true religion consists in following the Sunnah of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wassallam*. So, in all circumstances, we should ascertain what the Sahabah *Radhi-allaho anhum* did in such matters. Hence it is imperative for a true 'Alim to undertake a thorough study of the ways and manners of the Sahabah *Radhi-allaho anhum* and the course of action followed by them under various circumstances.

Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "Two types of person are innovators and they have introduced two kinds of innovations in Islam: (1) He who thinks about Islam, that true religion consists only

in his view, that only those who agree with him will attain eternal success, and (2) the one who prefers this material world, seeks its gains, likes those who struggle to achieve worldly things and dislikes those who do not try to earn worldly wealth. Leave both of them alone, for they will go to Jahannam. As for him whom Allah *Ta'ala* has protected from these wrong notions, he takes care to follow in the footsteps of the Divines of early times, adopts their manners and practices. It is such who will be generously rewarded, in the Akhirah, by Allah *Ta'ala*".

Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood *Radhiallaho anho* has said: 'Yours is the age in which desires are restrained by (religious) knowledge; a time will soon come when knowledge will be subservient to desires. People will try to justify whatever pleases their fancy with the help of their knowledge'. Some Divines have said: "During the times of the Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum*, Shaitan (the Devil) sent forth his detachments to all four corners of the world. They roamed the world and came back, disheartened and exhausted. The Devil asked, "How did you fare?" They said, "These people (the Sahabah) have defeated our designs. They are not at all affected by our temptations; they made our task very hard." Shaitan said, "Don't worry. These people are companions of their Rasul *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*; you cannot tempt them to evil. But soon, you will have people who will do what you desire." Then, once again, Shaitan sent forth his detachments in all directions, during the times of the followers ('Tabi'een) of Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum*. The devil's disciples again came back, worn out and cast down. When he asked them about their achievement, they said, "They annoyed us a good deal; they are strange people. During the day, we do succeed, to a certain extent, in tempting them into evils. But as soon as the evening falls, they repent of their sins so sincerely that all our labours are lost". Shaitan again said, "Don't worry. A time is soon coming when people will behave in a manner most pleasing to you: they will follow their own desires, taking them to be a sacred religious duty. They will not think of repentance; they will rather give religious sanction to their own innovations (Bid'aat) in Islam". After some time, Shaitan introduced into Islam such innovations as were accepted as a part of religion. How could they possibly repent of such a sin when they believed themselves to be on the right path?

This is a brief account of the twelve distinguishing characteristics of the virtuous Ulama, which have been thoroughly discussed by

Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe*. The Ulama should, therefore, particularly fear the Day of their Reckoning. They will be questioned more severely because they have a greater responsibility. And the Day of Resurrection, on which this Reckoning will take place, will be the most grievous Day. May Allah *Ta'ala*, in His Infinite Bounty and Mercy, protect us all from the severity of that Day!

④ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يَقُولُ ابْنَ آدَمَ تَفَرَّغْ لِعِبَادَتِي أَزِيدَنَّكَ رِزْقًا وَغِنًى وَأُسْدَ فَقْرٍ وَإِنْ لَا تَفْعَلْ مَلَأْتُ يَدَكَ شُغْلًا وَلَوْ أُسْدَ فَقْرٍ (رواه احمد وابن ماجه كذا في المشكوة. وزاد في الترغيب الترمذي وابن حبان والحاكم صحيحه وفي الباب عن عمران وغيره في الترغيب)

#### HADITH: 7

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* has stated that Allah *Ta'ala* demands: "O son of Adam, devote yourself to my worship, I shall make you feel contented and remove your poverty. But if you do not do so, I shall keep you busy with worldly engagements and will not remove your poverty."

There are many more Ahadith on the same subject. Imraan bin Husain *Radhiallaho anho* reported Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* as saying, "He who reserves his devotion to Allah alone, making himself subservient to Him alone, Allah *Ta'ala* Himself fulfils all his needs and provides for him from such sources as he could never imagine; and he who makes the worldly gains his sole concern, Allah *Ta'ala* leaves him alone to deal with the world."

Anas *Radhiallaho anho* narrates that Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once said "A person whose sole concern is for worldly interests, undertakes journeys for the same and remains preoccupied with it all the time, Allah *Ta'ala* always makes him fear the impending poverty and hunger. (He remains in constant worry, thinking his income to be too small to make both his ends meet.) Thus, much of his time is wasted in such idle cares, because he can only get as much as has been decreed for him. And, if someone



concentrates on the Hereafter, makes it the sole aim of his life, undertakes journeys for the same and remains preoccupied with it all the time, Allah *Ta'ala* protects him from worldly cares, grants him self-sufficiency and bestows upon him an unconcern about material things. He is blessed with perfect peace in his life and the world demeans itself before him."(*Targheeb*). The 'world demeaning itself' means that, as everyone must inevitably get what has been ordained for him, his apportioned share comes to him of itself. (We have already quoted a number of Ahadith to the effect that a man's livelihood pursues him in the same way as his hour of death. It is bound to reach him under all circumstances and if he receives it with an air of indifference, it would look as if the world is demeaning itself before a person who does not care for it.

In another Hadith, Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* is reported to have said, "Whoever seeks what Allah *Ta'ala* has in store for him (in the Hereafter), living with nothing except the skies as a cover and using the ground as a bed and having no anxiety for worldly things, will have food without having to till the land and get fruit to eat, without having to plant a garden. He is the one who puts his trust in Allah *Ta'ala* and always struggles to win His pleasure; so, Allah *Ta'ala* appoints the skies and the earth to procure him his livelihood; never do they hesitate to bring him the sustenance He desires. In this way, he gets all his provisions without the fear of reckoning on the Day of Judgement.' (*Durre Manthur*)

According to another Hadith, Ibne Abbas *Radhiallaho anho* is reported to have said: "Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* delivered a sermon in Masjid-al-Khaif at Minaa, in which he said, after praising Allah *Ta'ala*, "Whoever makes this world his only concern, Allah *Ta'ala* causes his affairs to be disturbed with a variety of worries, he is all the time haunted by the fear of privation and, yet, he cannot get more than his allotted portion of worldly goods."

Abu Zarr *Radhiallaho anho* reports Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* as saying, "He who hankers after this world, loses Allah *Ta'ala*'s concern for him; he who does not care for (the welfare of) the Muslim community, loses their regard for him. We have no concern for a person who demeans himself of his own accord (for worldly gains). Indeed it is not befitting for a Mo'min to demean himself before others, for some money or for any other paltry gains

of this world." (Undoubtedly such a person is not aware of his own worth as a Mo'min and he tarnishes the good name of his noble ancestors.) And his noblest connection is that of belonging to the Ummah of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, the pride of all Rasuls.

Anas *Radhiallaho anho* reports Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* as saying: 'Four things are signs of misfortune:

1. Tearless eyes (eyes that do not shed tears from fear of Allah *Ta'ala*);
2. Hard-heartedness (i.e. having a heart that is not softened by the thoughts of the Akhirah, nor moved to sympathy for others);
3. High hopes about distant future.
4. Greediness about worldly gains. (*Targheeb*)

Abu Dardaa *Radhiallaho anho* once exhorted people, thus: "O people! What is the matter with you? I see that, (because of death) the number of Ulama among you is decreasing day by day, and the ignorant among you do not care to acquire knowledge. Start acquiring it lest, because of the death of Ulama, a time should come when you may find no one to instruct you in religious knowledge properly. I see that you are greedy for hoarding provisions, even though your share is pre-ordained. But you neglect acquiring knowledge and performing good deeds, for which you have been made responsible. I see the worst among you are those who look on Zakaat as a fine, do not observe Salaat at the proper time and neglect recitation of the Holy Qur'an." (*Tanbee-Hul-Ghaafileen*)

① عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ أَحَبَّ دُنْيَاهُ أَضَرَّ بِآخِرَتِهِ وَمَنْ أَحَبَّ آخِرَتَهُ أَضَرَّ بِدُنْيَاهُ فَأَيُّكُمْ مَا يَبْقَى عَلَى يَفْتَى. (رواه احمد والبيهقي في شعب الایمان كذا في المشكاة)

#### HADITH: 8

He who loves this world, does harm to his Akhirah; and he who loves his Akhirah does (seem to) harm his worldly interests. So, give preference to what is everlasting over that which is short-lived. (*Mishkaat*)

However long a man may live, his life must end inevitably and

however big a person's fortune may be, he will have to lose it one day. It will either be spent and wasted during his life or he will die and leave it behind. The life Hereafter on the other hand is everlasting and its bounties are eternal. Hence everybody, if he has a little sense, should prefer the eternal to that which is shortlived. It is the height of foolishness to hanker after something which, even if one can attain it, does not remain in one's possession forever. Still, as our reason has been blinded by heedlessness, we have become enamoured of the beauty and adornment of this world, which, in reality, is like the waiting room of a railway station where the travellers stop for a short while, till the train comes and they board it, bound for their destinations. The best use of this short time is to spend it in making preparations for the journey, in arranging things which will be of use during the journey or after reaching the destination: During this brief stay, if someone were to spend his precious time in roaming about or in cleaning the waiting room and arranging its furniture properly or worse still in decorating the room with mirrors and other ornamental designs, leaving his luggage scattered about, he would naturally lose all his precious things.

In this Hadith, there is a warning against love of this world. For, love is the strongest of passions and if you love someone or something, by and by the object of love takes possession of your entire being. That is why Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* has persuaded us to cultivate a true love for the Hereafter and warned us against adoring this world. Indeed, one who loves this lowly world, may sometimes perform virtuous deeds for the Hereafter but, soon, the passion for the world asserts itself and gradually the man becomes negligent in practices valuable for the Akhirah. Our elders have advised, "He who is enamoured of this world cannot be guided into the right path, even though all the great Divines and Sheikhs make a united effort to reform him. Similarly, he who renounces this world and shuns it, cannot be led astray, even though all the corrupt people make a united effort to tempt him away from the right path." (*Mazaahir-e-Haqq*)

Baraa Radhiallaho anho reports Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* as saying: "He who indulges in a lustful life will be deprived of fulfilling his wishes in the Hereafter; he who looks greedily towards the ease-loving life of the well-to-do is regarded as a mean person in the kingdom of heaven; he who is contented with the minimum provision, from Allah *Ta'ala*, will be allotted an abode in 'Jannat-ul-Firdaus'. (*Durre Manthur*).



Luqman (the wise) *alaihissalam* is a well-known sage, whose advice to his son has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. It is said that he was a dark-complexioned slave from Abyssinia. Allah *Ta'ala* bestowed His favours upon him and he came to be known as Luqman the wise. According to some Traditions, Allah *Ta'ala* gave him a choice between kingship and wisdom. He said that he preferred wisdom. Another Hadith says: "Allah *Ta'ala* asked Luqman whether he liked to be a king and justly rule over the people." He submitted, "O my Lord, if it is a command from You, I must obey; for, in that case, I shall be assisted by You. But if I am granted the choice to accept or to decline, I would rather be excused; I do not like to undertake this onerous responsibility." The angels questioned him about it; he said to them, "A ruler is always in a difficult situation. Tyranny and other evils surround him on all sides, and everything depends upon whether he is Divinely aided or not. If he rules justly, he can attain to salvation, if not, he is led astray from the path leading to Jannah. And, it is far better to lead a humble life rather than to lead an easy life in this world and do harm to one's life in the Hereafter. He who prefers this world to the Hereafter suffers a double loss: this world forsakes him, sooner or later, and he has no value in the Hereafter." "The angels were greatly surprised at his remarks. After this, Luqman went to sleep and Allah *Ta'ala* bestowed wisdom upon him. (*Durre Manthur*)

Luqman's sayings and the words of advice, he gave to his son, contain rare wisdom, and quite a number of Traditions refer to 'Luqman's advice to his son'. One of these runs like this: "O my dear son, sit in the company of the Ulama frequently and listen carefully to what the wise men say, for Allah *Ta'ala* gives life to the dead hearts by the 'Nur' of wisdom, just as He revives the dead earth by heavy life-giving rains".

They relate that once a stranger passed by Luqman *alaihissalam* while he was sitting among his followers. The man said, addressing Luqman, "Aren't you the bondsman of such and such tribe"? He replied, "Yes, I was a slave boy of that tribe". The stranger asked again, "Aren't you the one who used to graze the goats near such and such hill?" Luqman replied, "Yes, I am the same person". The man said, "Then what has brought you to this noble position?" Luqman *alaihissalam* replied, "I was very particular about a few things and I observed them on all occasions, viz. fear of Allah *Ta'ala*, truthfulness in speech, fulfilling a trust and avoiding useless talk".

He says: "My son entertain good expectations from Allah without losing fear of His punishment. A fear of His punishment should not make you despair of His Mercy". His son said, "The heart is one; how can it contain hope and fear at one and the same time"? Luqman *alaihissalam* replied, "A Mo'min is such as if he possessed two hearts: one teeming with hope and the other equally full of fear." He advises his son to recite رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي (O my Lord, forgive my sins) frequently. For, there are certain hours during which Allah's special favours descend upon His men and everybody is granted whatever he asks from Allah *Ta'ala*." He says: "My dear son, no one can perform good deeds unless he possesses a firm belief in Allah *Ta'ala*. If a person's belief is unsound, he is very weak in performing good actions. My dear son, if Shaitan (the Devil) were to create doubts in your mind, let your firm belief overpower him and silence his whispers; and if he tempts you to be negligent in virtues, defeat him by remembrance of the grave and the Day of Resurrection; if he (the Devil;) tempts you towards joys of this world or makes you afraid of the hardships of this life, say to him, 'One must inevitably leave this world' (neither the luxuries nor the hardships of this life are enduring). He says: "My dear son, he who tells a lie loses the freshness of face, he who cultivates bad habits will ever remain sad; it is far easier to move huge mountains from one place to another than to reform the ignorant stupid." He says: "My dear son, abstain from telling lies; for lies soon arouse enmity and hatred for the liar. My dear son, be very particular about attending funeral prayers and avoid attending festivities. For, funerals remind one of the Hereafter and festivities divert one's attention towards this world. My dear son, do not eat anything when your stomach is full; it is better to put food before a dog than to over-eat. My dear son, don't be so sweet that people swallow you up, nor so bitter that they spit you out. My dear son, do not be less capable (in devotions) than a cock which starts crowing at early dawn and you be lying asleep in bed. My dear son, don't delay Taubah (Repentance), for death may take you unawares. My dear son, do not make friends with stupid people, lest you should develop a liking for their foolish talk. And do not incur the enmity of a wise man, lest he should turn away from you in disgust (and you should be deprived of getting benefit from his wisdom). My dear son, let no one but the pious partake of your food and always consult Ulama in your affairs".

Someone asked Luqman *Alaihissalam*, "Who is the worst of men?" He replied, "The one who does not mind being watched while doing an evil deed".

He says: "My dear son, associate frequently with the pious for, in this way alone, you can attain to the virtues that they possess. Besides, when Allah's special favours descend upon these beings you will also be able to receive your share of blessings; for when it rains, its showers fall on all sides of the house. My dear son, avoid the company of the wicked people, for no good can be expected to come out of associating with them. Moreover, if at any time, Allah's punishment befalls them, you will also be affected by it". He says: "A father's punishment is as beneficial for a child as is the water for the fields". He says: "My dear son, since the day you were born, every-day, you are getting closer to the Hereafter with your back towards this world. So, your abode in the Hereafter is far nearer to you (because you are advancing towards it everyday, at all times) than your house in this world (because you are moving farther and farther away from it day by day)".

He says, "My dear son, avoid incurring debts; for a debt is a humiliation by day and a grief by night. (One is disgraced when the creditors make demands by day, and one spends the night in grief, worrying about his debts ). My dear son, entertain hopes of mercy from Allah *Ta'ala*, but let not your hopes make you bold in committing sins; be fearfull of Allah but let not your fear make you despair of His mercy. My dear son, if someone comes to you with the complaint that so and so has taken out both his eyes and you actually see both his eyes missing, do not form any judgement about the person until you have heard the other side. For, this man might have hit the other person first and taken out four eyes' earlier". (*Durre Manthur*)

The legist (Faqih) Abu-ul-Laith *Rahmatullah alaihe* relates that, when the last hour came for Luqman, he said to his son, "My dear son, I have given you a lot of advice during my life-time; now that I am leaving the world, I would like to advise you about six points:-

- (a) Busy yourself in the affairs of this world to the extent of the remaining period of your life (which is nothing when measured up against the eternity of the Akhirah).
- (b) Worship Allah *Ta'ala* according to the measure of your dependence on Him (and, obviously, one needs His help in everything).
- (c) Make preparations for the Hereafter according to the extent of



your stay in that world (and, obviously, one shall have to stay there eternally, for there is no other place to go to after death).

- (d) Continue to struggle for redemption from Hell-fire till you are sure you have attained it. (It is common knowledge that, if someone is under trial for a grievous offence, he continues to make efforts for his acquittal till he is sure that the case is going to be decided in his favour).
- (e) If you have the audacity to indulge in sins, do so to the extent that you can endure Hell-fire (for, punishment of sins is dictated by law and you are never sure whether the Sovereign, however infinite His mercy may be, will grant you mercy petition) :
- (f) When you want to commit a sin, look for a hiding place that is not being watched by Allah Ta'ala and His angels (for, everybody knows the consequences of engaging in a revolt before the eyes of the Sovereign Himself or in the presence of His secret agents). (*Tanbeeh-ul-Ghafilin*)

These words of advice by Luqman have been mentioned here, as they bear upon the subject contained in the foregoing Hadith viz. 'He who loves this world does harm to his life in the Akhirah'.

'Arfajah Thaqafi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that he asked Abdullah Bin Mas'ood, *Radhiallaho anho* to recite the Surah beginning:

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى

*Glorify the Name of thy Lord, the Most High.*

Ibne Mas'ood *Radhiallaho anho* began to recite the Surah and when he recited the verse:

بَلْ تُوْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى

*But you prefer the life of the world, although the Hereafter is better and more lasting. (al-A'ala: 16 - 17)*

He stopped short and said "No doubt, we prefer the life of the world to the Hereafter". The audience sat silent. He again said, "We prefer the life of the world, because we see its beauty and adorn-

ments, its women, its food and drinks, while all the bounties of the Akhirah are veiled from us. So, we give preference to this world and lose sight of the Hereafter".

Anas Radhiyallahu anho relates that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "The Kalimah 'Laa Ilaha Illallah' (There is none to be worshipped but Allah) protects men from the displeasure of Allah, so long as they do not prefer their worldly business to the requirements of the Akhirah; and if they value worldly business more than the Hereafter, and recite the Kalimah 'Laa Ilaha Illallah', it is not accepted from them and it is said, 'You are liars (i.e. you are not sincere in your profession of faith; these are just empty words).'

Another Hadith reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, 'Whoever meets Allah Ta'ala testifying:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ

There is no God but Allah, Who is Alone and Who has no partners;

He will enter Jannah unless he mixes it up with other things". After he had repeated his words thrice, one of the companions said, "O Rasulullah, I would (love to) offer my parents for sacrifice in lieu of you, what is meant by 'mixing it up with other things'. He replied, "Love for this world, preferring it to the Hereafter, hoarding money for this life, taking pleasure in worldly possessions and behaving like the proud people".

Another Hadith reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "This world is a coveted abode for him who has no abode (in the Hereafter) and a much-desired property for him who has no property (in the Hereafter); and he who has no sense gathers provisions for the world". (*Durre Manthur*). Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Accursed is this world and all that it contains is accursed, except that which is for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala." (*Jami-us-Saghir*)

Imaam Ghazali Rahmatullah alaihe writes, in deprecation of the world: "All praise be to Allah Ta'ala Who has made His friends aware of the dangers of the world and its baneful influences. He has

revealed to them its secrets and warned them of its defects. The divines have realized the true nature of the world's various phases and have, after comparing its merits and demerits, realized that its harms are much more than its benefits. They understand that the hopes one entertains of this world are nothing in comparison with the dreadful consequences of worldly pursuits. The world is like a pert woman, of worthless character, who seduces people through its beauty and adornments, and leads to the damnation of all those who desire to enjoy its company. It runs away from those who adore or admire it and is most niggardly in returning their advances. Even when it gives attention to its admirers, its attention leaves them no peace in the midst of their trials. If the world perchance does one good turn to somebody, it goes on doing evil to him for a whole year. He who is fascinated by it, ultimately suffers humiliation; he who takes pride in his worldly achievements, has to reproach himself for his sorrowful end. It runs away from its admirers as it runs after those who shun its advances. It disregards those who serve it and advances towards those who turn away from it. Even its purity has a taint of impurity. Its joy is mingled with sorrow; its luxuries have an aftertaste of remorse and sorrow.

The world is like a deceitful treacherous woman; it adorns itself for its admirers but, when they have become enamoured of it, betrays them and upsets their plans. It bewitches them with its enchantments and, afterwards, gives them a taste of its fatal poison. The world is an enemy to Allah *Ta'ala* and it is an enemy to His friends and foes alike. It is an enemy to Allah *Ta'ala* in as much as it waylays those who undertake a journey to Him: it is an enemy to the friends of Allah because it adorns itself to fascinate them, and then forsakes them to taste bitter sorrow. It is also hostile to the enemies of Allah, for it deceives them with its treacherous pranks and, when they begin to trust its friendship, it forsakes them when they are in dire need of help, thus causing them to suffer endless sorrow".

There are many Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an and quite a number of Ahadith on deprecation of worldly attachments. All Ambiya (Prophets) *Alaihimussalam* were sent to mankind for warning them of such attachments. Once Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* came upon the dead body of a kid. Addressing the Sahabah he said, "Do you think this dead body is of any value to its master?". The Sahabah replied, "Obviously, it is of no value to him. That is why he has thrown it away." Then Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*



said; "The world is more contemptible in the sight of Allah *Ta'ala* and of far less value than this dead kid is to its master. If the world was equal, in value, to a gnat's wing in the estimation of Allah *Ta'ala*, He would not give a non-believer draught of water out of its resources". Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "Love of the world is the basis and the source of every sin".

Zaid bin Thaabit *Radhiallaho anho* says, "Once we were sitting in company with Abu Bakr *Radhiallaho anho* when he asked for water and was presented some water mixed with honey. He held it to his mouth and was about to drink it when he broke into tears and began to weep. He wept so bitterly that those who were sitting beside him were also moved to tears and everybody wept most bitterly. He again held the cup to his lips, but put it back again and began to weep and cry. At long last, he wiped his tears and said, 'I was once sitting in company with Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* when I saw that he was pushing something away from himself with both his hands, though I could not see anything. I asked, 'O Rasulullah, what is it that you are driving away from yourself?' He replied, 'The world presented itself to me, but I drove it away. It came to me once again and said, 'You have guarded yourself against me, but there will follow people who will not be able to protect themselves against me.'

It occurs in another Hadith that once Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said; "Most astonishing is the case of a person who believes that the life Hereafter is permanent and everlasting and yet struggles to achieve (the gains of) this world, which is an abode of deception." Once Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* came upon a dunghill where there lay some decayed bones, droppings of animals and rags of worn-out cloth. He stopped there and said, "Look, this is what the world, its beauty and adornments come to in the end".

There is another, rather detailed, version of this Hadith, though Allama Iraaqi *Rahmatullah alaihe* and other scholars say that they have not been able to trace its source. However, Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* has made a reference to it and the author of 'Qoot' has related it, in a 'Mursal' form, on the authority of Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe*. (A 'Mursal' Hadith is one in which a man in the generation following the Sahabah directly quotes Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*). It reads: Abu Hurairah *Radhiallaho anho* narrates that once Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said

to him, "Shall I show you the true nature of this world?" He submitted, "Certainly, O Rasulullah, Whereupon he took him to a dunghill outside Madinah Munawwarah, where there were lying some human skulls and excrements, rags of worn-out cloth and bones, etc., and said, "Abu Hurairah, these are skulls of men. Their brains were full of greed as you are today for (the things of) this world. They used to build up high hopes about the distant future, as you do today. But now the empty skulls are lying on the ground and, in a few days, they will turn to dust. These excrements are, in reality, those delicacies of food which were bought with hard-earned money, cooked with diligence and eaten (with relish). Now they are lying here, in a state repulsive to men. These rags are, in fact, pieces of fancied dress which people used to wear and feel proud. Now they have become rags scattered about by the winds. These are the bones of beasts, on which people used to ride and roam about proudly in the world. Let him who cares weep and cry over these circumstances". Abu Hurairah *Radhiallaho anho* says, "At this all of us wept most bitterly".

In another Hadith, Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* is reported to have said, "This world looks fresh and sweet and Allah *Ta'ala* has made you heirs and successors of your forefathers in this world, in order that He might watch your conduct in it. When worldly goods were lavishly given to the children of Israel, they were fascinated by the beauty and adornments of this world and they fell into temptations concerning women and ornaments."

*Isaa alaihissalam* says, 'Do not make the world your master or, else, it will enslave you; deposit your possessions with Allah *Ta'ala* where no harm can come to them. The wealth lying in the treasuries of the world may go waste at any time, but no *mishap* can occur to the Treasury of Allah *Ta'ala*. He also says, 'One sign of the depravity of the world is that acts of disobedience to Allah *Ta'ala* are committed in it and another such sign is that no one can attain to the Hereafter without forsaking worldly gains. Take heed and mind it well that love of the world is the source of every sin and that a little while spent in following one's vain desires may lead to a long period of suffering. He also says; "There are people whom the world seeks and others who seek the world, it goes after those who seek the Hereafter and unwillingly lets them have their means of sustenance. As for those who seek this world, the Hereafter does not care for them till death lays its hand on them (they die without having achieved any gains of the Akhirah )."

It is said that once Sulaiman *Alaihissalam* was flying on his throne with his armies, while birds spread their wings above him to protect him from the sun, and the courtiers from among the jinns and men sat with him on either side. He came upon a saint, who said, "Subhanallah, Allah *Ta'ala* has bestowed upon you such a vast kingdom". Sulaiman *alaihissalam* thereupon said, "The credit entered in a believer's book of deeds for reciting (سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ) 'Subhanallah' once is far greater in value than the entire kingdom of Sulaiman, for, this kingdom shall come to an end soon enough and the blessings of 'Subhanallah' (سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ) will endure permanently."

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* says, "He who seeks this world, making it his ultimate aim (in life), Allah *Ta'ala*, has no regard for him and afflicts him with four things: (1) an anxiety that has no ending (i.e., he always remains anxious to increase his income); (2) an occupation, leaving him no spare time; (3) a neediness which deprives him of any feeling of contentment (when his income increases, the expenses also increase and the income always seems to be insufficient); (4) unending hopes about the distant future, which can never be fulfilled."

It occurs thus in the 'Sahaaif' (revealed booklets) of Ibrahim *alaihissalam*, "O world, how contemptible you are, in the sight of the pious men for whom you adorn yourself! I (Allah *Ta'ala*) have inspired their hearts with enmity for you and made them turn away from you (in disgust). I have not created anything more contemptible than you. Your grandeur amounts to nothing, because it vanishes very soon. I decreed on the very day I created you that you would not remain with anyone forever, nor would anyone keep you with himself forever, howsoever unwilling he might be to part with you. Blessed are the pious persons who apprise Me of their wholehearted acceptance of what I have decreed for them, and tell Me about the truth of their true and strong faith. This is the eternal prosperity! When they rise from their graves and come to Me. I shall grant them a radiance (Nur) which will shine forth before them and the angels will be there on their right and on their left; and, to crown all, I shall fulfil all their hopes and grant them everything that they expected of Me."

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* says, "On the Day of



Resurrection, some people will have good deeds weighing as much as all the mountains of Arabia; but they will be thrown into Jahannam." When someone asked, "Will they be observers of Salaat?" He replied, Yes they will have observed Salaat, kept fasts and been regular in Tahajjud (Nafil or supererogatory midnight Salaat). But, in spite of all this, they were such as would rush for any worldly gain, wealth or honour, etc (without caring whether it is lawful or unlawful). Says Isaa Alaihissalam; 'Love of this world and love for the Akhirah cannot be cherished by one in the same heart, just as no vessel can hold both fire and water at the same time'

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam says, "Keep away from this world; It is a sorceress more deceitful than 'Haaroot' and 'Maaroot'." Another Hadith says, 'Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam came upon a company of Sahabah and said to them, 'If any one of you wishes that Allah Ta'ala should remove his blindness of the heart and open his eyes to the instructive aspect of things, let him remember that whosoever loves this world and entertains excessive hopes about the distant future, Allah Ta'ala makes his heart blind in proportion to the extent of his longings. And whosoever shuns this world and restricts his hopes, Allah Ta'ala shall grant him knowledge without his having learnt it from anyone else and lead him to the right path, without being guided by anyone else. Soon there will arise people who shall rule through slaughter and oppression, who will amass sufficient means by niggardliness and vanity and who will win the hearts of the people through submission to their wanton desires. If anyone of you witnesses such times and remains contented with his insufficient means, though he could become rich; and endures hatred of the people, though he could command their love by following their desires; and remains contented with humble position though he could win popularity through fulfilling their desires, in short, if he endures all these things only for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, he will get a reward equal to that of fifty 'Siddiqueen' (Siddiqueen is the plural of 'Siddiq', the one who gives his sincerest support to the Nabi).

Another Hadith has it to the following effect, 'Once a lot of wealth was received by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam from Bahrain. When the needy among the Ansaar of Madinah Munawwarah heard about it, a large number of them came to offer Fajr Salaat with Rasulullah. When the Salaat was over, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam looked at the gathering and smiled; he

then said, "I think you have come because you have heard of the wealth I have received from Bahrain". They submitted, 'O Rasul-ullah, It is true; we have come for the same thing'. Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* then said, 'I give you glad tidings that soon there will be abundance of wealth: you can hope to get what would please you. I have no fears of your going astray through poverty or hunger, but rather I am afraid that worldly wealth may come to you in abundance, as happened with previous generations, and as a consequence you may set your hearts upon the world, as they did, and that it would ruin you as it ruined them'.

Another Hadith says that Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once said; "What I fear most on your account is that Allah *Ta'ala* should bring forth for you the blessings of the earth". Someone asked, "What are the blessings of the earth". He replied, "The attractive fruitfulness of the earth."

Abu Dardaa *Radhiallaho anho* reports that Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once said; "If you knew what I know, you would laugh less and weep more often and the world would become contemptible in your sight, and you would not prefer it to the Hereafter". After relating the Hadith, Abu Dardaa *Radhiallaho anho* added on his own account: "If you knew what I know, you would go out to the jungle, weeping and crying and leave your property unguarded. But your hearts are heedless of the requirements of the Hereafter and you have, before you, worldly hopes and aspirations. That is why the world has become your master and all your activities are directed towards it; you have reduced yourself to a condition of stark ignorance. What is worse, some of you have become like the animals, indulging in lustful activities, not minding the evil consequences. What has happened to you that you do not love one another, nor admonish one another, though you are brothers in Islam? There is discord among you because of your wrong desires, arising out of the corruption within you. If you are united in the cause of 'Deen' and affairs of 'Deen', your bonds of mutual relationship will be strengthened. What has happened to you, that you counsel one another about affairs of this world, but do not do so about affairs of the Akhirah? You are incapable of admonishing those whom you love and do not give them good counsel about the affairs of the Hereafter. This is only because of your weak faith. If you had faith in the good and evil things of the Hereafter, like your belief in the good and evil things of this world, you would certainly

give preference to the Akhirah. The Akhirah should have greater control over your affairs. You may say that the needs of this world are immediate, while those of the Hereafter are remote. Just imagine how many activities there are, in this world, of which the fruits have to be reaped later. Still you toil and fret and struggle hard for them! For example, you work hard in the fields, for months together, hoping to reap crops in the end. Similarly, you take pains to plant trees in the garden, hoping to pick the fruit after years of hard labour and patient waiting. You have deteriorated, in matters of faith, so much that you do not care to gauge the level of your Imaan (faith) by doing things that would reveal it".

"If you have any doubts about the revealed knowledge conveyed to us by Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, please come to us, so that we may show you the truth of this knowledge and make it abundantly clear to you. Come, we will show you the light by which you will be able to see, for yourself, that whatever Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said is absolutely true. You are no fools that we should regard you incapable of understanding it. For, you hold sound views about worldly affairs and act upon them most carefully. Then, what is wrong with you that you do not exercise wisdom, nor act with due care in affairs of the Akhirah. What has happened to you? Why is it that you feel very happy over a paltry gain of this world and feel very sad over a little loss, to the extent that its effect is reflected in your faces. You complain of your 'sufferings', calling a little trouble a 'suffering' and hold meetings to console one another. But you are not grieved, nor feel sad, when you happen to miss an important religious requirement; your faces do not wear an expression of sorrow. When I see your indifference towards 'Deen', I feel inclined to think that Allah *Ta'ala* has forsaken you. You greet one another happily but everyone avoids saying anything which may be unpleasant, though true, to the other. He fears lest the other person should say to him something in return, which would displease him. So, you live amicably, keeping all dark thoughts to yourselves. Thus you have become corrupt from within though, outwardly, you seem to be enjoying life. And you seem to have all agreed not to think of death. I wish Allah *Ta'ala* would grant me death and relieve me of sorrow on your account! And, I wish to join the company of those I love most dearly (meaning Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* and the *Sababah Radhi-allaho anhum*). If they were alive, they would not have liked to associate with you, even for a short while. If there still remains an



iota of good in you, take heed. For, I have told you what I think of you clearly and without hesitation, and I have spoken the truth. It is quite easy to achieve that which Allah Ta'ala has got in store for you (the boons of the Hereafter). And I seek help from Allah Ta'ala, both for you and myself'. (Here ends the Exhortation given by Abu Dardaa *Radhiallahoh anho*.)

This admonition by Abu Dardaa *Radhiallahoh anho* deserves deep consideration, because he was showing his displeasure to those persons with whom we, today, cannot stand comparison. If Abu Dardaa *Radhiallahoh anho* were to see our present-day deplorable indifference towards 'Deen,' he would certainly have died of sorrow and grief. Surely for people like him, the sight of our present-day sad plight in religious matter would be most unbearable.

Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "May Allah have mercy upon those who were given this world as a trust and they, in turn, entrusted it to others and passed away, freed from the worries of the world!" He also says, "If anyone prevents you from observance of 'Deen', defy him; but if anyone hinders you from gaining a worldly advantage, leave it for him and have no care". Abu Haazim *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Protect yourself from worldly attractions! On the Day of Resurrection, a man will be summoned and the announcement shall be made, 'He is the man who set great value upon things which had been condemned by Allah Ta'ala'. Abdullah Ibne Mas'ood *Radhiallahoh anho* says; "Everybody is, so to say, a guest in his own house; and all his possessions are like borrowed things. The guest shall go back home (to the Hereafter) and the borrowed things shall have to be returned".

Once Rabi'ah Basriyyah *Rahmatullah alaiha* was sitting in company with some people who were talking of the world reproachfully. She said, "Do not talk of the world. Do not talk of it even disparagingly. For, your talking of it shows that you consider it to be worth talking about, and something of consequence. If it were of no consequence in your sight, you would never have liked to make a mention of it. (For, who would talk about the filth that men excrete?)"

Luqman Alaihissalam said, in the course of his last advice to his son, "Barter this world for your 'Deen', you will reap the benefits (of the bargain) both in this world, and the Hereafter; but do not barter

away your 'Deen' for the sake of this world, or else you will suffer loss in this world and the next". Mutarrif bin Shikheer *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Do not look admiringly at the luxurious life of the kings and their fine dress. Consider what shall be the end of all this."

Abu Umamah *Radhiallaho anho* says, "When Rasulullah *Sal-lalloho alaihe wasallam* was sent as a 'Nabi' to mankind, Shaitan (Satan) sent forth his detachments to take stock of the situation. They came back and told him that a 'Nabi' had been sent to mankind and that he had a large number of followers. Shaitan then asked them to make sure whether they (the followers) loved the world. His disciples replied, 'Yes, certainly'. Shaitan then said, 'I do not mind, even though they shun idol-worship, for I shall seduce them with three things: (1) earning money by unlawful means, (2) spending it in an unlawful manner, and (3) refusing to spend it on things on which it should be spent."

Ali *Radhiallaho anho* says: "Man shall have to render an account of his lawfully earned money and he will have to suffer punishment for the money earned unlawfully." Maalik bin Dinar *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Beware of this sorceress (the world), because its magic works even upon the hearts of the Ulama".

Abu Sulaiman Darani *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "He whose heart is occupied with love of the Hereafter cannot be at peace with the life of the world; for the latter will go on struggling to take possession of his heart. On the other hand, he whose heart is occupied by the love of this world, need not worry about any hindrance from the Hereafter. For, the life of Akhirah is like a being of noble disposition, least willing to take possession of homes occupied by others. And this world is mean by nature, imbued with the desire to occupy others' houses by force". Maalik bin Dinar *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "The more you worry about this world, the less concerned will you be about your Hereafter. And the more concerned you are about the Hereafter, the less worried will you be about this world."

Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "I have known people to whom the worldly benefits were of less importance than the earth on which you walk and they did not care a whit for the gain or loss of those benefits. Nor did they care to notice who was receiving them and who was being deprived". Someone asked him, "What do you

think of a person whom Allah Ta'ala has granted abundance of wealth and he spends it, giving it away as Sadaqah or spends it on his relations? Is it advisable for him to partake of delicious food and lead a sumptuous life? Hasan *Rahmatullah alaihe* replied, 'No, even if he were to possess all the treasures of the world, it would be advisable for him to spend on his own needs only as much as was absolutely necessary. He should remit all that exceeds his barest needs to the next world, where it will be treasured up for him to be utilized on a Day (the Day of Resurrection) when he is in dire need of help.'

Fudhail *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "If I were presented all the riches of the world, with the assurance that no reckoning will be made for it, I would not accept it; for me, it is disgusting like carrion, which you avoid for fear for polluting your clothes". Hasan *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Bani Israel, though they worshipped Allah Ta'ala, became degenerate and began to worship idols because of their love of the world". He also says, "Man always considers his wealth to be little, but he never regards his virtues to be few. He does not care if any calamity befalls his religion but feels upset if any harm comes to his worldly life."

Fudhail *Rahmatullah alaihe* says; "It is quite easy to join worldly pursuits, but very difficult to extricate oneself from them." A Divine says, 'I am astonished at him who believes that death is inevitable and that it may come to him at any time but, still, he takes pleasure in worldly pursuits. I am astonished at him who believes that Jahannam is a reality and that nobody knows what his last abode in the Hereafter is going to be but, still, finds occasions to laugh. I am astonished at him who views the shifts of fortune occurring in this world at all times but, still, feels satisfied on receiving a worldly gain. I am astonished at him who believes in the Divine Decree (the belief that everything is preordained and that everyone must get his allotted share), but still takes pains for worldly gains'.

They say that an old Sheikh, whose age was about two hundred years, came from Najran city to see Ameer Mu'aawiyah *Radhi-allaho anho*. The Ameer said to him, "You have seen a good deal of this world in your long life. What is your opinion about it?" The Sheikh replied, "A few years of ease and a few years of pain. There are births, and deaths every day and night. If there were no births, the world would come to an end. Likewise, if there were births only,



there would be no room left for the people to live in the world. (Hence, both births and deaths should continue to occur, to keep the world population within moderate limits)."

Ameer Mu'aawiyah *Radhiyallahu anho* said, "Do you want any thing from me.? Tell me if I can do you any service." The Sheikh said, "Recall my past life for me or postpone my death indefinitely". The Ameer said, "I cannot do that." The Sheikh said, "Then I have nothing to ask from you".

Abu Sulaiman *Rahmatullah alaihe* says:

"No one can restrain himself from pleasures of this world, except he whose heart is preoccupied with things of the Akhirah."

Maalik bin Dinaar *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "We have, as it were, agreed among ourselves to love this world; that is why no one gives good counsel to another, nor forbids him from evil things. But Allah *Ta'ala* will not leave us to our fate for ever. The punishment of Allah may descend upon us unawares in any form, at any time!" Hasan *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "When Allah *Ta'ala* wishes well for anyone, He grants him a small amount of worldly wealth, then holds it back from him and, when he has exhausted his provisions, Allah *Ta'ala* grants him a little bit more. But he, who is considered contemptible by Allah *Ta'ala*, is granted abundance of worldly goods." One divine used to make Du'aa (supplication), thus, "O Allah! O Sacred Being, Who possesseth the power to hold back the heavens from falling on the earth, prevent this worldly wealth from coming to me".

Muhammad Ibne Munkadir *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "Suppose a man fasts persistently, spends the whole night in Tahajjud salaah without taking rest, gives away generous amounts of money as Sadaqah, engages in Jihaad and avoids sins; nevertheless, he will be summoned on the Day of Resurrection and made to appear before Allah *Ta'ala*. He will then be required to explain why he set great value upon a thing (the world) which had been declared as worthless by Allah *Ta'ala*, and why he regarded as insignificant a thing (the Akhirah) which had been declared by Allah *Ta'ala* to be of great value. Imagine how miserable and helpless he will feel! Then, what about ourselves who suffer from the same disease (love of the world) and also commit sins?

Abdullah Ibne Mubaarak *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "Love of the world and indulgence in sins have made our hearts wild and insensible to anything good". Wahab Ibne Munabbih *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "He who takes pleasure in anything of this world strays from the path of wisdom; while he who tramples his lusts underfoot, never allowing them to raise their head, Shaitan is scared of even his shadow."

Imaam Shafi'ee *Rahmatullah alaihe*, advising one of his brothers in Islam, said: "This world is full of mud and slush where many persons slip. The world is an abode of humiliation. Its bustling life will give place, in the end, to desolation, its dwellers will have to travel alone to their graves, its gathering disperses, its affluence turns to poverty; its riches involve taking pains and lack of them means an easeful life. So, turn to Allah *Ta'ala* with single-minded concentration. Be content with whatever sustenance Allah *Ta'ala* has apportioned for you and do not borrow for this world out of your stock of virtues meant for the Akhirah (i.e. do not indulge in things which may have to be paid for in the Akhirah out of virtues which may run short on that Day of dire necessity (the Day of Judgment)). The life of the world is like a shadow which vanishes in no time or like a leaning wall which is going to collapse very soon. Perform plenty of good deeds and entertain few worldly hopes about the distant future."

Ibrahim Ibne Adham *Rahmatullah alaihe* asked someone, "Which would you prefer: seeing somebody, in a dream giving you a Dirham (silver coin) or receiving a Dinaar (gold coin) while awake?" The man replied that, obviously, receiving a Dinaar was preferable. At this, Ibrahim *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "You lie. For, if you love anything of this world, it is like taking pleasure in a thing you see in a dream. And, when you turn away from a boon of the Akhirah, it amounts to declining it while awake."

Yahya Ibne Mu'aaz *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "Three persons are wise: (1) he who forsakes the world before being forsaken by it; (2) he who makes preparation for the grave before the time comes for him to enter it; (3) he who wins the pleasure of Allah *Ta'ala* before he (dies and) goes to meet Him." He also says: "This world is accursed to such an extent that merely longing for it makes you neglectful in devotion to Allah *Ta'ala*; what will happen when you become engrossed in worldly affairs." Bakr Ibne Abdullah *Rahmatullah alaihe*

says: "He who, after achieving worldly benefits, feels secure against their evil effect, is like one who covers fire with dry grass, in order to extinguish it." Bundaar *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "When you hear worldly people talking about renunciation of worldly pleasures, be sure that Iblees (Shaitan) befools them."

A Divine says, "O people, perform good deeds during these days of respite (lifetime) and fear Allah! Do not be deceived by high hopes for the distant future and forgetfulness of death. Take no thought of this world, for it is a deceitful wretch. It beautifies and adorns itself and beguiles you by fanciful hopes about the future but, in the end, lands you in temptations. It adorns itself for its admirers so that, after make-up, it looks like a newly-married bride on her wedding-day. So, people fix their gaze upon her face, the hearts are fascinated by its charms and many men become enamoured of its (fake) beauty. But this wretch has killed many of its admirers and forsaken, most helplessly, many of its lovers who counted upon its loyalty. Just consider and try to comprehend the reality of this world. It is a place abounding in things that are fatal to the soul and it is so contemptible that its Creator has Himself condemned it. (Suppose a physician prepares a medicine and says that it contains poison and that you may take a very small dose of it only when it becomes absolutely necessary. Now, if a foolish person were to take a much larger quantity in a single dose, it would be fatal for him. And, for someone not to heed the physician's warning, would be the height of foolishness. All things of the world which are new today, will wear out and become old. Sovereignty in this world is short lived; those who are in power will end in humiliation; affluence will ultimately change into poverty; friendships will not last for long. In short, all that looks good in the world is doomed to perish. May Allah bless you all! Wake up from lethargy and inaction.

"Rise from the slumber of negligence before it is too late, before it is rumoured about, 'So-and-so has fallen ill and there is little hope of recovery. Direct us to some good physician. Call in some efficient doctor'. Then the doctors will be sent for, the physicians will be called in, time and again, but everyone will say that there is no hope of life. Then it will be whispered about; the man is making his will; his voice has become hoarse, rather it has choked he does not recognise, anyone he is heaving deep breaths, he is moaning with pain, his eyelashes droop. This is the time when the circumstances of the Next World will be revealed unto you, but your voice will fail you



and you will stutter, unable to express yourself or speak a word. Your kinsmen, your son, your brother, your wife will be standing near your bed, all weeping with bitter sorrow. You will look at their faces but will not speak a word. And then the soul will begin to depart from the parts of your body, one after the other, till at last it leaves the body altogether and flies to the heavens above. The kinsmen will hurriedly arrange for the burial and the mourners will be consoled, their grief lightened with weeping. The enemies will rejoice over your death, the heirs will divide up your property and you will be left to reap the consequences of your deeds. (This is the real significance of this life)".

Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* wrote in a letter to Amir-ul-Mo'mineen Umar Ibne Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe*, after praising Allah *Ta'ala* and invoking His choicest blessings (Salaat on Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*): "The world is a transitory place, where men stay for a brief while, and go on a journey again, bound for the Unknown. It is not a permanent abode. Adam *Alaihis-salam* was sent down to this world as a punishment (1) for a lapse that he happened to commit in Jannah, i.e. it is a prison-house where man has been sent as a punishment. So, you should be on your guard: One's most valuable asset for the journey is non-attachment to the world and its pleasures; and the really rich are those who, though poor, possess a sublime unconcern for worldly attractions. (Those who seem to be poor but have contented minds are really rich). This world is all the time busy leading men to their ruin: it humiliates those who hold it dear; it leads into dependence (on others) all those who wish to amass its wealth. It is like a poison which men take unknowingly and die.

"So, live in the world as though you were a wounded patient who is careful and cautious about everything so that he may regain his health; and takes bitter medicines, lest his disease should drag on longer. You should beware of this treacherous, deceitful, tricky that adorns itself for seducing people and lands them in misery. It visits people with fanciful hopes and beguiles those who try to win its favours. It beautifies itself for its admirers and, after make-up, looks like a bride, on whom people fix their eyes and become enamoured of its false beauty, but this wretch is hostile to everybody. Still, one wonders why the survivors do not learn a lesson. Nor do the scholars, who know the word of Allah, learn a lesson from His sayings (on deprecation of this world). The admirers of the world are

deceived when they see their chance of worldly desires getting fulfilled.

"They become engrossed in the world and ignore the Akhirah. And what follows is sheer remorse and utter sorrow, for death overpowers them with its agonies and harrowing pains, and, in addition, there is grief over parting with the world and its prized possessions. The fact is that he who craves for the world can never see the fulfilment of his desires; nor does he find peace and respite from labour till he departs from the world, without having prepared for him eternal life. O Ameer-ul-Mo'mineen! 'Be on your guard against worldly attractions especially during the hours of joy and prosperity, for, the world drags those who trust it, into some misfortune as soon as it finds them experiencing brief moments of joy. He who is happy in the world is suffering from an illusion and he who is after making (excessive) profit will come to harm.

"The ease and comfort of this world is mixed with hardships and life in it is destined to perish. Its joys are mingled with sorrow; whatever is past cannot be recalled, and all that lies ahead, is uncertain. The hopes of this world are false. Whatever seems to be pure in this world is, in reality, polluted; its luxuries are gained with hard labour and man, in this world, is in danger at all times. If he had sense, he would find the pleasures to be perilous and constantly haunted by misfortunes. Even if Allah Ta'ala, Who is the Creator of this world, had not warned mankind against its evils, the treacherous nature of the world itself would have served as a sufficient warning. Nevertheless, Allah Ta'ala Himself has advised that it is of no value in His estimation and that, although He has created it, He has never looked at it with appreciation.

"The world presented itself, with all its treasures, before Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, who did not accept it, nor showed any interest in it. For, he did not want to approve a thing rejected by Allah. That is why Allah Ta'ala has purposely turned the hearts of His pious men away from it and granted it, in abundance, to His enemies (the non-believers). But some people who have set their heart on the world, see the Kaafirs in affluence and wrongly think that they have been favoured by Allah Ta'ala. They do not realize how little, in the world, was granted by Allah Ta'ala to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam who had to tie up stones over his belly in order to numb the pangs of hunger."

A Hadith says that once Allah Ta'ala said to Musaa Alaihis-salam: "When you find worldly riches coming to you, be sure it is a punishment for your sins; and if you see poverty and hunger coming, welcome it and say, this is the distinguishing mark of the pious." And, let him who wants to follow the example of Eisa Alaihis-salam mark his words: "Hunger is my curry (when one is hungry, even plain bread tastes as delicious as the bread taken with curry); my distinguishing mark is fear of Allah; my dress is of coarse wool; I bask in the sun for warmth and the light of the moon is my lamp; my feet are my riding-beast; my food and my fruit is the grass that grows on the earth; I rise in the morning with nothing with me and when the evening comes I have nothing in my possession. But there is no one in the world richer than myself". (Contented in mind and with a sublime sense of self-sufficiency).

On this subject, many other sayings of the *Ambiya alaihimussalam*, the *Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum* and great saints *Rahmatullah alaihim* are found in religious books. One point, however, should be clearly understood: Undoubtedly, truly virtuous and commendable is the life of devotion and austerities indicated in the sayings and biographical accounts of these pious souls. Nevertheless, one should make allowance for one's own infirmity and lack of capability and try to emulate them only to the extent of one's capacity. These glimpses from the lives of the pious beings are meant to impress our readers with the true standards of (virtuous) life. One may lead a less austere life, if it becomes necessary to do so, in consideration of one's ill health or bodily infirmity.

This can be illustrated by a familiar example; that of a patient who does not fast during the Holy month of Ramadhan. Obviously, fasting is obligatory during this month but, if someone cannot fast owing to weak health or because the doctor says it is injurious to his health, he will not observe fasting. It is obvious that fasting is, for every Mo'min, a highly appreciated obligation during this month. The patient, though exempted from fasting, would love to observe it like every true Muslim. Similarly, as we cannot fully live up to the austerity demanded by pious life, owing to our weak will-power and poor health, we are obliged to attach ourselves to worldly efforts, to the extent of our needs. But we should be conscious of own weaknesses which have prevented us from living up to the standards; and believe sincerely that true religious life is the life led by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam the life of *Ambiya Alaihimussalam*, and



that of the great Divines *Rahmatullah alaihim* whose sayings have been quoted above.

Besides, we should develop a true awareness of the insignificance of this world, of its being unworthy of our affection, as a temporary abode. Although we are weak and feel obliged to indulge in worldly matters, we should try so that these truths about the world may get rooted in our minds. And, we should not only talk of them, but believe that these facts are absolutely true. For, there are no reasons to regard this wretched world as of any real consequence.

Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "The world is going to perish very soon. It will not endure; it makes false promises and never fulfils them; it seems to be at rest but, in reality, it is fleeting, though its motion is not perceptible to the senses. People become conscious of its fleeting motion when it forsakes them altogether. It is like a shadow that is in motion all the time but its movement is not perceptible". Once, when there was a mention of the world, before Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe*, he stated,

أَحْلَامُ نَوْمٍ أَوْ كَظَلٍّ زَائِلٍ إِنَّ اللَّيْبَ بِمِثْلِهَا لَا يُخَدَعُ  
يَا أَهْلَ لَذَاتِ دُنْيَا لَا بُقَاءَ لَهَا إِنَّ اعْتِرَاقًا بِظِلِّ زَائِلٍ حَقٌّ

"It is like a dream that the people have, in sleep; or like a shadow always in motion. The wise cannot be deceived by things like this". Imaam Hasan *Radhiallahoh anho* used to recite this couplet frequently: "O people who are given to the pleasures of the world; which wont endure; remember it is mere folly to be deceived by a moving shadow!"

Yunus Ibne Ubaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that he has suggested to himself the following similitude about the world: "A man is asleep and dreams many things, good or bad. Suddenly he wakes up and the dream is shattered. Similarly, all men in the world are asleep; and all that they see or do is a dream. When they die, they wake up from the slumber and there is no substance in the worldly joys or sorrows."

They say that, *Eisaa Alaihissalam* was shown the reality of this world in a vision. He saw it as a very old toothless woman who was shown wearing a bright dress, with all kinds of ornaments, and finery, to look like a bride. When *Eisaa Alaihissalam* asked, "How many times have you already been married?" She said, "Too numerous to be counted." *Eisaa Alaihissalam* then asked her, "Did your husbands die or did they divorce you?". "No! I killed them all", she replied. He said, "Cursed be your remaining husbands who do not learn a lesson from the fate of those who have been killed by you, one after the other". Indeed, the world is like an old hag who adorns herself with gorgeous clothes. People are deceived by her appearance, but they are soon disillusioned when they uncover its face to see its ugliness and real nature.

*Alaa Ibne Zayaad Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "I saw an old hag, in a dream, who was wearing fine clothes, ornaments, etc., and was adorned with all manner of beautiful things. There was a big crowd of people around her who were watching her with great interest. I went close to her but, when I looked at her face, I was astonished at all those who stood there, watching. I asked her (in the dream), "Who are you?" She said, "Do'nt you recognise me?" I replied, "No, I do not", She said, "I am the world". "May Allah guard me against you," I prayed. She said, "If you want to be safe from me, abhor Dirhams (wealth)". *Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho* says:

"On the Day of Resurrection, the world will be brought before the people. It would look like an old hag, with blue sunken eyes and protruding teeth. People will be asked, "Do you recognise her". They will say, "May Allah protect us all! Who is this monster?" Then they will be told, "This is the world the world for which you killed one another, severed blood relationship, felt jealous of one another, nourished grudge against others; it is the world that deceived you all." Then this old hag will be hurled into Jahannam. She will cry, "Call my admirers! Send my followers with me to Jahannam". Then Allah *Ta'ala* will give the command: "Send to Jahannam all those who followed this world".

There are three stages for every individual in the world: (1) from the beginning of creation to the time of his birth ;(2) the period stretching from the time of his death to eternity; (3) the intervening period between his birth and death. Now, if we measure this third period against the long vistas of eternity, our life-span is indeed a

very short period. On the same subject, there is a Hadith of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*: "What interest can I have in the world? I am just like a traveller who sits in the shade of a tree for a while at noon, then walks ahead and leaves the tree behind". Undoubtedly, he who regards the world in the manner of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, will be least interested in it; little will he care whether this short period is spent in joy or sorrow, in comforts or in hardships.

It occurs in another Hadith that: Once when Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* saw that a Sahabi *Radhiallaho anho* was building a house with mortar, he said, "Death is nearer to you than this building". According to the other Hadith, Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "The man devoted to worldly interests is like a person walking on water. Can anyone walk on water without getting his feet wet?" This Hadith shows the ignorance of those who are heard saying, "Our bodies derive sensual pleasures out of worldly things, but our souls are not contaminated by it, neither are our hearts enamoured of it". Such people are tricked by Shaitan into holding such views. The fact is that, if worldly things are snatched away from these people, they will get upset at the loss. Then, as a person walking on water cannot, in any way, protect his feet from getting wet, a man who indulges in worldly pursuits does, of necessity, affect his soul adversely.

Eisaa *Alaihissalam* Says: "Let me tell you the truth! Just as a patient, when he is seriously ill, cannot enjoy food, so a worldly-minded person cannot experience devotion in his prayers. And, as a riding-beast gets stubborn if nobody has ridden it for a long time, similarly, the hearts of men, if they are not softened with the remembrance of death and rigorous devotional practices, become hard and not disposed to worship. And let me tell you another truth about life. A goat skin bag proves a good container for honey (or water, etc.) as long as it is not torn. But when it is torn, honey is not put in it any more. Similarly, the human heart can contain wisdom as long as it is not torn by lusts, corrupted by greed or hardened by indulgence in good things of life. Besides, there is another point worthy of note: the lusts of this world have a honeyed taste. But, in the end, at the time of death, they become noxious and disgusting."

Some Divines have written that the more absorbed a person is in worldly life, the greater will be his disgust for it at the time of death.



They illustrate the point by means of an example: if a person takes sumptuous food, i.e. rich in fats, his stools are more foul-smelling than those of a person who eats plain food.

After what has been said against the world it is very important to consider what the term 'world' signifies, for, there are many Verses of the Holy Qur'an and Ahadith deprecating the world. It should be borne in mind that the term 'world' (*Dunya*) applied to all the circumstances of man's life before death: all that he does, thinks or feels. Similarly, the circumstances of the life after death are called 'Akhirah'. Now, things concerning life before death may be subdivided into three broad categories:-

1. Things which, as soon as a man dies, are carried on to the next world with him. These are his knowledge of Deen and the good deeds performed purely for winning the pleasure of Allah *Ta'ala*. These two, knowledge and good deeds, are related to the Akhirah and they constitute one's Deen and cannot, therefore, be called worldly things, even though one may derive pleasure out of them, and such people may have no relish for food, drink, sleep or even marriage.
2. Sensual pleasure of sinful deeds and exclusive indulgence in things that are lawful to indulge only to a restricted extent—for example, piles of gold and silver, gorgeous clothes, good-looking beasts for riding, lofty palaces, delicious food. All these things are purely worldly things, which have been condemned in the foregoing pages.
3. In between these two extremes — the purely religious and the exclusively worldly — there are the bare necessities of life, which help a person in performing good deeds for the Akhirah, for example, food that sustains life, sleep, plain dress which is necessary for protection against heat or cold. All such things, which are necessary for life or good for health or which help a person in his preparation for the Akhirah, are also excluded from the category of 'Worldly things', as they form a part of religion and pertain to the Akhirah, provided that one indulges in them to the extent of necessity and for the sake of gaining strength for religious duties. On the contrary, if these things are indulged in for the sake of sensual pleasures or for the fulfilment of the heart's desires, they will also be termed as worldly pursuits.

My father (May Allah brighten his grave with heavenly light) used to narrate to us a story very often: "There was a person who wanted to go to Panipat on some urgent errand. Between his village and Panipat city, there flowed the river Jamna which was, as it chanced, in flood at that time and could not be crossed even with a boat. He was greatly worried and did not know what to do. People told him that there lived a Divine in such and such jungle and that if he went there and told him about his difficulty, the pious man would find a way out and suggest some means of going across the river. They said that the Divine would be greatly annoyed and would refuse to help but, if he persisted, not giving way to despair, the Divine would be moved and grant him some assistance.

So, the man went to the forest and met the saint who lived in a small cottage, with his wife and children. The man wept and cried and said he was in great difficulty as he had to appear in the court and there were no means to cross the river. At first, the Divine took him to task, as usual, and said he could do nothing as he had no power over the river. But when the man showed great humility, he was moved and he said, "Go and say to the Jamna, I have been sent to you by a person who never, even once, ate anything throughout his life, nor had intercourse with his wife". The man did as he had been told. The river suddenly stopped in its course and the man went across. As soon as he had crossed over, the Jamna began to flow again.

But back in the cottage the wife of the Divine, who had heard him talk to the man, began to weep and cry, horrified by the slander implicit in his words. She said, "You have put slander on my chastity and humiliated me before this man. You said you ate nothing. Then how did you grow fat and fleshy like an elephant? You may lie about yourself as you please, but how dare you speak thus about me being your wife and knowing only too well that there is not a grain of truth in it? Is it not a sheer slander on me? Does it not imply that these children are not your legitimate issue"? The Divine said, "This is no concern of yours when I declare them to be my legitimate children". But the lady would not be persuaded. She continued to cry in hysterics, "You have called me an adulteress, At this, the divine said, "Take heed and listen carefully. Eversince I came of age, I have never eaten anything to satisfy my own desire; but whatever I ate I did so, with the sole intention of gaining strength for obeying the Commandments of Allah Ta'ala. And, whenever I made love with you, I did so with the pure intention of fulfilling my obligations to you,

never even once, have I done so for the satisfaction of my own passion".

The following is another Hadith, in which *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* is reported to have said, "Every man has been created with three hundred and sixty joints and, every morning, he should give Sadaqah for every joint in his body (in gratitude for the soundness of his joints)". When the Sahabah *Radhiyallahu anhum* asked, "O *Rasulullah*, Who can give away so much Sadaqah every-day?". *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "To put some earth over some spittle, etc., lying in the Masjid is Sadaqah; If you remove, from the road, something that may harm people, it is Sadaqah; and if you observe 'Dhuha Salaat' (forenoon Nafil Salaat), it will suffice you as Sadaqah for all these." (Mishkat). Since every joint is engaged in devotion, while observing Salaat, it counts as Sadaqah for all the joints of the body. In another Hadith, many other examples of such virtues have been given; it says: "When you greet someone (i.e say *Assalamo alaikum*) or enjoin what is good, or forbid what is evil, or have intercourse with your wife, it counts as Sadaqah for you; and observing two Rak'aat of forenoon (Dhuha) Salaat suffice you for various acts of Sadaqah, as it counts as Sadaqah for all joints of your body". The Sahabah asked, "O *Rasulullah*! In the intercourse with his wife one satisfies his passion, how will it be treated as Sadaqah?" *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "Would it not be a sin if he indulged in something forbidden?"

The Hadith means that it is an act of virtue to have intercourse with one's wife with the intention of protecting oneself from unlawful indulgence in sex. Similarly, all such acts like eating food, drinking water, sleeping, wearing clothes, etc., are counted as acts of Sadaqah, if they are performed with the pure intention of fulfilling the Commandments of Allah *Ta'ala* concerning these things.

Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "It is not unlawful or forbidden to indulge in the worldly pursuits; these become unlawful when they prevent a person from attaining nearness to Allah *Ta'ala*. Similarly, poverty is not desirable in itself but it is commendable because there is nothing in it to distract a person or to lead him away from the path of nearness to Allah. However, there have been many rich persons whose riches could not prevent them from attaining nearness to Allah *Ta'ala*, such as the Prophet Sulaiman *Alaihis-*



*salam*, the Khalifah Uthman, Abdur Rahman Ibne 'Auf and many others. Likewise, there are many people who are poor and their poverty prevents them from attaining nearness to Allah *Ta'ala*; because poverty, when it is combined with greed for wealth, leads one astray from the path of virtue. Hence, it is the greed for wealth which is really unlawful or forbidden. And, it makes little difference whether the person who has this weakness achieves the object of his desire and becomes rich or he has not achieved it, like a worldly-minded poor man.

As a matter of fact, the world is loved by those who, rich or poor, are negligent towards remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala*: the poor man enamoured of the world is like a forsaken lover, ever pining for it and yet unable to attain it; the rich man is like a lover united with his beloved, too anxious for its preservation and too engrossed in enjoying it to engage himself in remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala*. However, as a general rule, the poor ones are less exposed to trials and temptations than the rich who have fallen a prey to its temptations. This fact also explains what the Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* used to say, about themselves: "We were tried with the afflictions of poverty, we exercised patience (and we were successful). Then we were tried with the abundance of wealth, but we could not keep ourselves from temptation."

It is true that, in prosperity, most people cannot protect themselves from the harmful effects of wealth and such instances are extremely rare where we find a person capable of guarding himself against the evil influence of the wealth inspite of his possessing it. That is why there are numerous Ayaat in the Holy Qur'an and many Ahadith of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* which admonish men against the harmful influence of involvement in worldly pursuits. At any rate, it is beneficial for everybody to avoid indulgence in wealth. That is why the divines have said that fondling money (turning over coins, currency, etc, in the hands) sucks out sweetness from one's faith (Imaan).

Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* has said, "For every people (Ummah), there has been a 'calf' (idol-god or false deity) that they worshipped; the 'calf' (idol-god) for my Ummah is money and gold . (i.e. they adore it just as other people worshipped their idols), and the 'Calf' of the Ummah of Musaa *Alaihissalam* was also moulded out of gold and silver ornaments . (*Ihya*). And, it is the privilege

of the *Ambiya Alaihimussalam* and the great saints alone that gold, silver, water and stones are of equal value in their sight, an attitude which is strengthened further by austerities and rigorous acts of self-mortification. In this matter, when the world, with its beauty and adornments, presented itself before *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, he said to it, "Keep yourself away from me."

*Ali Radhiallaho anho* once said, "O yellow ore (gold)! O white ore (silver)! Beguile someone else! (I will not be deceived by you)". As a matter of fact, true riches consist only in possessing a heart unattached to the worldly wealth. There is a Hadith of *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* to the effect that:

"Riches do not come from abundance of wealth, but true riches consists in having a heart with a sublime sense of Self-sufficiency". Since every body cannot attain to this perfect state of mind, so, it is safer to keep away from wealth. For, if a person possesses wealth, his heart will inevitably become attached to it, even though he be accustomed to give away things as 'Sadaqah' and this attachment is fatal to the soul. As a rule, the more involved a person is in the world, the farther and the more estranged he is from *Allah Ta'ala*. On the other hand, if somebody is less attached to worldly wealth owing to his poverty, and he is a Muslim, he will be inevitably intimate with *Allah Ta'ala*. For, the human heart must of necessity be occupied and inspired with love of one thing or the other: if a heart's connection with all created things is severed, it will naturally seek nearness to *Allah Ta'ala*.

A rich man is often deceived by believing that he is not in love with wealth; it is a big fallacy and mere illusion. The fact is that love for the world is latent in his heart, but he is not conscious of it. When something of the world is lost or stolen, he realises how deeply he loves worldly goods. If someone wishes to verify it by experiment, let him distribute his property among the people. If he becomes worried after giving it away, he must certainly be in love with property; but, if after having given it away, he does not even so much as think of it and forgets about it altogether, then his heart is assuredly free from love of the world.

Furthermore, the less enamoured of the world a person is, the greater will be his reward for the acts of devotion ; the reason being that all hymns (glorifying *Allah Ta'ala*) and devotional practices are

not mere exercises of the tongue or the body, but are meant to exert spiritual influence on the heart; if a person's heart is not occupied with the thoughts of the world, he is more capable of receiving deeper impressions.

Dahhaak *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "He who goes to the market-place, sees something, and wishes to buy it, but cannot do so for want of money, but still remains patient, his reward will be greater than that of a person giving away a thousand Dinaars (gold coins) as 'Sadaqah' for the cause of Allah *Ta'ala*". When someone asked Bishr Bin Harith *Rahmatullah alaihe* to offer Du'aa (supplication) for him, as his family was large and he was in straitened circumstances, the Sheikh replied, "When your wife tells you that there is no food left in the house (and you are worried about it), that is the most opportune hour for making Du'aa (supplication) and your Du'aa at that time will be far more acceptable to Allah *Ta'ala* than my Du'aa for you at this time".

Besides on the Day of Resurrection, the least a man will suffer (for his riches) is that he will have to render an account of his abundant property, which will take him a long time. We have quoted above a Hadith to the effect that Abdur Rahman Ibne Auf *Radhi-allaho anho* was allowed to enter Jannah much later than his own companions, owing to (the prolonged accounting of) his abundant wealth.

Abu Dardaa *Radhiallaho anho* once said on this account: "I would not like to do business even if my shop were at the gate of the Masjid, enabling me to join congregational prayers and to engage myself in meditation and remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala*; nor even if the shop brought me a profit of fifty gold coins everyday and I gave away the entire amount as Sadaqah". Someone asked, "What harm could come to a person doing such business." He replied, "Even so, it will take a long time to render an account of it on the Last Day".

Sufyaan *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "The saints have chosen three things and the rich people have also chosen three things; The saints have chosen: (i) a body relaxed comfortably (ii) a care-free heart and (iii) an easy reckoning on the Day of Resurrection. The rich have chosen: (i) bodily toil (ii) a heart occupied with worries and (iii) a prolonged reckoning on the Day of Resurrection". (*Ihya*)

There is an oft-quoted Hadith of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe*



*wasallam* to the effect that; "(On the Day of Resurrection) A man will be with those whom he loves". It is said that the Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* were never so happy about anything, after their acceptance of Islam, as they were when they heard this Hadith. They had every reason to be happy because their hearts were inspired with great love for Allah *Ta'ala* and His Rasul *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, which was manifest in their faces even more brightly than the sun in the skies.

Abu Bakr *Radhiallaho anho* says: "He who is granted a taste of love for Allah *Ta'ala*, becomes free from the cares of seeking the world and shuns the society of people". Abu Sulaiman Daarani *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "There are men, created by Allah *Ta'ala*, who are so whole-heartedly attached to Him that even Jannah, with all its bounties and eternal bliss, cannot distract their minds from contemplation of Allah *Ta'ala*. How can the temporal world engage their attention?"

It is said that once Eisa *Alaihissalam* came upon a group of people who were thin and weak in body, pale of face. He asked, "What has happened to you?" They replied, "Fear of Jahannam has reduced us to this condition." Eisa *Alaihissalam* said, "Allah *Ta'ala* (in his infinite bounty) has made it incumbent upon Himself that He will protect from Jahannam all those who are fearful of it." Then he went a few steps further and came upon another group of people who were in worse condition, weaker in body and with more worried faces. He asked, "What ails you?" and they replied that their fondness for Jannah, and longing for its bounties, had made them so weak. He said, "Allah *Ta'ala* has taken upon himself the responsibility to bestow upon you (and the like of you) what you expect from Him". He then went still further and came upon another group of people who seemed to be weaker still. They were weighed down and bent double with grief but their faces were radiant like a mirror, with Divine radiance (Noor). Eisa *Alaihissalam* put them the same question and they answered, "It is our love for Allah *Ta'ala* (and craving for reunion with Him) that has reduced us to this state". Whereupon Eisa *Alaihissalam* said repeating the words thrice, "You are the intimate ones! You are the favourites of Allah!"

Yahyaa Ibne Mu'aaz *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "In my estimation, the love for Allah *Ta'ala* ---- even to the extent of a grain of mustard-seed, is far superior to seven years of worship without

④ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَا يَزَالُ قَلْبُ الْكَبِيرِ شَابًّا فِي اثْنَتَيْنِ فِي حُبِّ الدُّنْيَا وَطَوْلِ الْأَمَلِ. (متفق عليه كذا في المشكاة)

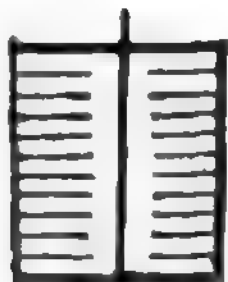
## HADITH: 9

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "The heart of an old man always remains youthful with regard to two things: love of the world and inordinate longing (about distant future)". (Mishkaat)

*Note:* We have discussed in detail, under the preceding Hadith, that the term 'Dunya' or the world' signifies love for wealth, which has been repeatedly condemned in the Holy Qur'an and Ahadith. In this Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has admonished us about another very important matter, the truth of which can even be verified by experience. It is a common observation that love of the world increases with old age, and one begins to entertain much higher hopes regarding distant future. The older a person grows and the nearer his hour of death approaches, the stronger his ambitions grow, concerning the marriages of his children, the building of lofty mansions, increase in property and extension in the estate, etc. It is therefore, necessary to guard oneself against one's own greed especially at this age.

In another Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said, "Man grows old but two things remain young in him: greed for wealth and desire for long life". (Mishkaat). Desire for long life is just another name for the high hopes and expectations about distant future. For, as a man grows old and his hour of death approaches nearer, he engages himself in preparations for his life even more desperately, as though he were to live here forever, and he is least prepared to meet his death.

Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam drew a square (by way of illustration). In the middle of the square, he drew a long line which went out even beyond it. Then on both sides of the middle line, he drew some small lines reaching up to it. The Divines (Ulama) have given various descriptions of this diagram, of which the following diagram is easy to understand:



The Holy Prophet then said, pointing to the middle line, "This is man and this, (the square) which is surrounding him on all sides, is his death: he can by no means escape it. This, which goes beyond the square, is his hope; he entertains hopes that go even beyond his fixed period of life. And these small lines are the misfortunes, ailments, accidents, turns of fortune, etc., that haunt him at all times, each small line representing a misfortune; if one misses him, the other seizes him and, above all, death surrounds him on all sides. But hope goes even beyond the period of life destined for him".

Another Hadith says that once *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* put his hand on the back of his head and said, "This is his death hovering over him". He then stretched out his other arm and said, "These are his hopes stretching farther and farther". According to another Hadith, *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "In the beginning the well-being of this Ummah was based on its firm belief in Akhirah and disregard for worldly things; and the first thing to cause its corruption will be niggardliness and inordinate longing about the distant future". (*Mishkaat*) There is another Hadith on the same subject, to the following effect: "The early period of this Ummah attained salvation by virtue of its firm belief in Allah Ta'ala and disregard for worldly things; the last of it will be damned through niggardliness and high hopes regarding distant future." (*Targheeb*)

Still another Hadith has it to the following effect: "A time is approaching when people will invite one another to destroy you (the Muslims), as people invite one another to partake food served for eating" (i.e. every nation will persuade and invite others to join hands with them for destroying the Muslims somehow). When the *Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum* asked, "O *Rasulullah!*, Will it be because of our small numbers at that time"? *Rasulullah* replied, "No, you will be in large numbers at that time; but you will be like the froth on flood water. Allah Ta'ala will take away fear of you from the hearts of your enemies and put 'Wahn' (enervation) into your own hearts. The *Sahabah* asked him, "What is 'Wahn' (enervation) and he replied, "Love of the world and dislike of death". (*Mishkaat*).



Umme Waleed *Radhiallahoh anha* daughter of Umar *Radhiallahoh anho* says that one evening Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* came out of his house and said, "Aren't you ashamed of yourselves?" When the Sahabah *Radhiallahoh anhum* asked what the matter was, he replied, "You store up more food than you eat; build more houses than you live in; and entertain such hopes as you can not fulfill. Are you not ashamed of such behaviour? (*Targheeb*) That is to say, "You build houses much larger than you need." One should build a house only as big as is necessary for one's requirements. The Hadith also admonishes not to store up things in excess of one's needs, for what exceeds one's needs is not to be stored up, but should be spent for the cause of Allah. Aishah *Radhiallahoh anha* narrates that once, when Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* was seated on the pulpit while the Sahabah *Radhiallahoh anhum* were sitting around him in a circle, he said: "O people, observe due modesty in your attitude towards Allah *Ta'ala* (Take care not to do or say anything which might cause you to be ashamed of yourselves in the presence of Allah *Ta'ala*". The Sahabah submitted, "Certainly, O Rasulullah, we do not do anything unsuitable in the presence of Allah *Ta'ala*". Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* then said, "Whosoever among you has this modesty (i.e. is afraid to indulge in things that might shame him before Allah *Ta'ala*), must keep death in view during every night; must guard his belly and what it surrounds; must guard his head and what it contains; and must remain in constant remembrance of death and decay; and must forsake the adornments of the world." (*Targheeb*)

The Ulama say that the injunction to guard his head' means that he must not bow his head before any one except Allah *Ta'ala*, neither for worship nor out of reverence; nor should he make a deep bow while giving salutation to anyone. Similarly, the phrase, guard what the head contains means that he must guard his eyes, ears, tongue, etc. And 'guarding the belly' means protecting oneself against eating unlawful or doubtful things; that which the belly surrounds includes all parts of the body close to the belly, like hands, feet, heart, private parts; he should guard all these against disobedience.

Imaam Nawawi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that it is comendable (*Mustahab*) to recite this Hadith frequently. Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud *Radhiallahoh anho* narrates that once Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* said, "O people, observe due modesty in your attitude

towards Allah Ta'ala." We submitted, "Certainly O Rasulullah, we all have this modesty . Allah be praised!" Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then said, I do not mean modesty in the ordinary sense; but he who observes due modesty towards Allah Ta'ala must guard his head and what it contains, must guard his belly and what it surrounds (private parts, etc.); must remain in constant remembrance of death and decay; and he who desires the Akhirah must forsake this world." Since, by frequent remembrance of death, one is sure to develop a feeling of disregard for this world and a tendency to restrict one's hopes and ambitions, so Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has enjoined upon us to keep death in constant remembrance.

Once, a person came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and said, "O Rasulullah, who is the greatest 'Zaahid'? (i.e. one least concerned about worldly good)". Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "He who never forgets his own death and decay, abandons the adornments of the world, prefers the Hereafter to this life, never feels sure that he will live till tomorrow, and counts himself among the dead, that he is going to die soon and join the dead." (Targheeb)

Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Have constant remembrance of death, the cutter-off of pleasures; for him who remembers it in straitened circumstances, it brings ease and consolation (he can console himself with the thought that death is inevitable and will put an end to his hardships); and he who remembers it in prosperity, is restrained from spending lavishly." (He cannot find much pleasure in the luxuries of the world, because his mind is distracted by thoughts of death).

Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho has also narrated a Hadith to the effect that once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Keep in continual remembrance the cutter-off of pleasures, which is death". Anas Radhiallaho anho says that once, when Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam came out and saw the Sahabah laughing, he said, "Keep in frequent remembrance the cutter-off of pleasures, which is death; it restrains him who remembers it in prosperity (from indulging in passions etc.) and it brings ease and consolation to him who remembers it in straitened circumstances".

Abu Sa'eed Khudri *Radhiallaho anho* narrates that once Rasul-ullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* came to the Masjid and saw some people who were laughing, whereupon he said, "If you keep remembrance of death, the cutter-off of pleasures, it would restrain you from indulging in things that give rise to laughter. For, everyday, the grave of everyone announces, "I am the house of desolation, I am the house of loneliness. I am the house of worms". When a Mo'min (believer) is buried in it, it says to him, "Most welcome! Blessed be your coming to me! How happy I am to receive you! You were indeed to me the dearest of all the people who walked upon the earth. You have been entrusted to me today and you will see how well I treat you". Then it grows wide for him, as far as his eyes can see; and a door to Jannah is opened for him.

And when an evil-doer or a (Non-believer) is buried in the grave, it says to him, "Accursed be your coming to me! How annoyed I am with you! Of all the people who walked on the earth, you were the most hateful to me. I have been put in charge of you today and you will see how I treat you". It then presses in upon him so that his ribs are crushed together and run into one another. The narrator says that, here, Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* interlaced his fingers to indicate how the ribs run into each other. Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* then added, "Seventy dragons are set over him to bite him. So full of venom are these dragons, that if one of them were to breathe upon the earth, it would grow no greenery till the last Hour. They will continue to bite him till the Day of Resurrection." The narrator also reports that Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said after this, "The grave of a man is either one of the gardens of Jannah or one of the pits of Jahannam".

Ibne Umar *Radhiallaho anho* relates that someone asked Rasul-ullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, "Who is the wisest and most prudent of men, O Rasulullah". He replied, "He who keeps death frequently in his remembrance, and remains ever engaged in preparations for meeting his death; it is such people indeed who are granted honour in this life and who will be honoured in Akhirah." (*Targheeb*)

It is related that once Umar Ibne Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe* accompanied a bier to the funeral but, on reaching the graveyard, he went over to a solitary place and sat silent, lost in thoughts. Someone asked, "O Ameer-ul-Mo'mineen, you are the guardian of



this funeral and you are sitting here alone?" He said, "I heard a grave calling me and it said, 'O Umar Ibne Abdul Aziz, do you not ask me how I treat those who come to me?' I said, 'Do tell me' and it said, 'I tear their shrouds, I crush their bodies to pieces, I suck all their blood, I eat all their flesh. And, shall I tell you what I do to their joints? Oh, I disjoin their arms from their shoulders and the wrists from their arms! I disjoin the hips from their bodies, the thighs from their hips, the knees from their thighs, the calves from their knees, and the feet from their calves'. Saying this, Umar Ibne Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe* began to weep and at length he added:

"O brief is our stay in this world and great is its illusion! Those who are noble and proud in this life will be humbled in Akhirah; those who are rich will be made poor and destitute. The young will soon grow old and the living shall meet death. Let not the smiles of the world (favours of the world) beguile you! Don't you see how soon it turns away from its admirers? Oh, where are the great admirers of the world, who built great cities, dug big canals, planted beautiful gardens? They stayed here but little and were gone, leaving everything behind! Their sound health and the strength of their bodies deceived them, breeding in them a zeal for lustful life, and induced them to sinning. By Allah *Ta'ala*, Most High, they were envied in the world for their abundant wealth and people were jealous of them. But, in spite of obstacles, they earned big fortunes which roused jealousy in the minds of the people, but they were unmindful of the hindrances that stood in their way to affluence and prosperity and they bore, with pleasure, the hardships that they had to face for amassing wealth. But see now, what the earth has done to their bodies, what the worms have made of their joints and their bones! They used to recline on rich couches and diwans, and rested on soft fluffy beds raised above the ground, surrounded by their servants and attendants, with their kinsmen and neighbours to keep them pleasant company. But what is happening now! Just call them and ask them: 'How are you faring in your graves?' Everybody, rich or poor, is lying under the same ground.' Ask the rich among them, 'What use were the riches to you? Ask the poor, 'What harm did the poverty do to you?' Ask them, 'What about your tongues that chirped and chattered pleasantly? What happened to your eyes that kept looking in all directions? What about your smooth skins; and your beautiful, charming faces; and your tender, delicate bodies? Ask them what worms have made of them all! They have made their complexion black, eaten up their flesh, covered their faces with dust, disjoined their limbs, broken their joints to pieces!

Alas! Where are their attendants who ran at their commands, calling out, 'At your service, my lord . Where are their canopies and their apartments to which they retired for rest? Where is the wealth they amassed, the fortunes they treasured? Alas! Their servants could not provide them any food for their journey through the graves, nor gave any pillow, nor planted any tree or garden, but laid them on the ground! Ah! There they lie buried all alone, in the darkness of the graves; their days as dark as the night! They can see their friends no more, nor invite anyone to their places! Ah! among the inmates of these graves, there might have been many men with tender bodies, and delicate ladies of dainty disposition! But now their bodies have decayed, their limbs lie apart, their eyes have come out of the sockets and fallen on what had been their cheeks! Their necks have been disjoined! Their mouths are filled with pus and putrid water, and worms are running over their bodies !'

'Ah! while they lie there, resigned to death and decay, their widows have long since remarried, and are enjoying themselves; their sons have taken possession of their houses; their heirs have distributed their property among themselves! Nevertheless, some fortunate ones there are, among the inmates of these graves, who are having a blissful time, partaking of the bounties of their Lord, with faces fresh and radiant. They were not beguiled by this world, but kept the Akhirah in remembrance; they sacrificed their worldly desires for their requirements in Akhirah and treasured up rich assets (good deeds) for the life to come, sending forth, as though in advance, things they thought they would need in the Akhirah.

"O you who must inevitably pass on to the grave tomorrow, what has beguiled you about this world? Do you think this wretched world will not betray you? Do you hope to live in the world forever, where men come and go and no one ever stays? Oh, no! You will have to depart from this world, leaving behind your spacious bungalows and your ripening fruit-gardens, and your soft couches, and your suits for summer and winter! Take heed, when the 'Malak-ul-Maut' (Angel of Death) comes and gains control over your body, none can send him away! Then you will perspire profusely. A severe parching thirst will torment you. And you will toss and turn in bed, in the agony of death! Alas! Alas ! O you who close the eyes of your brother today (when you find him in the throes of death), you who close the eyes of your son, or your father, you who bathe this dead body today, put a shroud on another one tomorrow, accompany the bier of this one,

bury that one in the grave, don't you think the same things may happen to you, any day?"

Umar bin Abdul Aziz continued to discourse in this vein for quite some time and then recited two couplets, the purport of which is as follows: "Man takes joy in things which vanish very soon; and beguiles himself with worldly hopes and inordinate longing about the future.

O fool, it is foolish to be deluded by fanciful dreams of joy; your days are spent in utter heedlessness. And you sleep your nights away in dreams, though death haunts you, as grim as ever, all the time!

'You are busy today, doing things which will cause remorse and make you grieve tomorrow! Yours is the life of animals, eating and drinking as they do!' They relate that hardly a week had passed after this incident when Umar-bin-Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe* passed away to the mercy of Allah *Ta'ala* (May Allah be well pleased with him!)(*Musaamiraat*)

Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* is reported to have said once, "Four things are signs of misfortune: (i) tearless eyes (eyes that do not shed tears of repentance over one's sins or from remembrance of anything regarding the Akhirah) (ii) hard-heartedness; (iii) inordinate longing, extravagant hopes about distant future; (iv) greediness and avidity for life."

Abu Sa'eed Khudri *Radhiallaho anho* says, "Once Usaamah bought a slave-girl and promised to pay the price after a month. When Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* came to know of it. He said, 'I am astonished at Usaamah. He made a bargain on credit and promised to pay after a month. Even Usaamah entertains long hopes of his life! (i.e. he is certain that he will live till the end of the month, at least). By Him who holds my soul in His Hand, I am not sure that I may live till the twinkling of an eye; and when I take up the bowl to drink water, I do not feel sure whether I shall live till I have put it back; and when I take a morsel of food, I am not sure whether I shall swallow it before I die. I swear by Him, Who is the Master of my soul, the things you have been promised (death, the Resurrection Day, the Reckoning, etc.) will surely come to pass and you cannot prevent your Lord Allah *Ta'ala* from doing things"



Abdullah bin Umar *Radhiallaho anho* says, "Once Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* took me by the shoulder and said, "Live in the world as if you were a stranger or a way-farer and count yourself among the inmates of the graves"; then he added (and some versions say that Abdullah Ibne Umar *Radhiallaho anho* himself made this statement), "When the morning comes, do not expect that you will live to see the evening and when evening falls do not expect to live till morning; when you are in health, do good deeds to serve you in the time of illness (meaning, either, 'do good deeds in advance to compensate for the possible loss of virtues in ill-health,' or; 'make a habit of performing good deeds when you are healthy) for the same will be recorded for you when you are ill and incapacitated); prepare something in your life to serve you when you die; for you never know among whom you will be counted tomorrow (i.e. whether you will be counted among the 'wretched ones or the blessed ones. Allah *Ta'ala* says;

فِيهِمْ شَقِيحٌ وَبَارِكٌ

*Some among them will be wretched, others blessed.*

Mu'aaz *Radhiallaho anho* once asked, "O, Rasulullah, give me some advice". Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "Worship Allah *Ta'ala* as though you see Him and He is in front of you; count yourself among the dead; make remembrance (Zikr) of Allah *Ta'ala* near every stone and every tree (so that there may be many witnesses in your favour on the Day of Resurrection). And when you fall into a sin, do some act of virtue to atone for it; if the sin is committed in secret, the virtue should also be performed in secret and if the sin is committed openly, the repentance and the virtue in atonement should also be performed openly".

Ibne Mas'ood *Radhiallaho anho* reports Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* as saying, "The Day of Resurrection is drawing near; but people are advancing in their avidity for worldly things and moving farther away from Allah *Ta'ala*". Once Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* came out of his house and said to the Sahabah, "Is there anyone among you who wishes that Allah *Ta'ala* should grant him knowledge without having to learn it from others, and lead him to have the right path without having to seek guidance of others? Is there anyone who wishes that Allah *Ta'ala* should remove blindness of his heart and grant him proper insight into the reality of things? If

so, let him have no concern with the world and restrict his hopes about the future. For only then, will Allah Ta'ala grant him knowledge without having to learn it from others and lead him to the right path without having to seek guidance from others". (*Durre Manthur*)

(A detailed version of this Hadith has already been discussed in the foregoing pages). Jaabir Radhiallaho anho reports Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam as saying, "The things I fear most for my Ummah are: too much of worldly desires and expectations regarding the distant future; for, desires lead one away from Truth and expectations about distant future make one forgetful of Akhirah. This world is moving and getting farther and farther away while Akhirah is drawing closer everyday" (i.e. one's remaining life is decreasing every minute and death is drawing nearer and nearer). As an Urdu poet has put it:

غافل تجھے گھڑیاں یہ دیتا ہے منادی  
گروں نے گھڑی عمر کی ایک اور گھنٹا دی

'O you, who are heedless, take heed! In the ticking of the clock there's a warning: Another hour of your life is 'gone' (i.e. it sounds as though the words, 'gone' 'gone' were being echoed in the ticking of the clock.)'

Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam said, "Both this world and the Akhirah have sons. Try, if you can, to avoid being sons of this world (and be the sons of the Akhirah). This day is the time for deeds (sowing seeds) and not a time for Reckoning, but tomorrow you will be in the abode of Akhirah where no deed is possible (Tomorrow is a time for harvest, when you will reap the harvest of your deeds)". (*Mishkaat*)

Salman Farsi Radhiallaho anho says, "Three (types of) persons seem so odd to me that, when I think of them, I cannot help laughing; he who entertains hopes about the distant future, while death is after him; he who is heedless of Allah Ta'ala, though Allah Ta'ala keeps a guard over him; he who laughs heartily though he does not know whether Allah Ta'ala is pleased or displeased with him. (As a matter of fact, the fear of displeasure of Allah Ta'ala

should always prevent a person from laughing loudly). And three things keep me in constant sorrow to such an extent that sometimes I burst into tears: separation from my friends (i.e. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and Sahabah), anxiety about death and apprehension of appearing before Allah Ta'ala on the Day of Resurrection when He will command me to go to Jannah or Jahannam, I know not where I will have to go."

Someone dreamt that he saw Zurrarah -bin-Aufaa Rahmatullah alaihe after his death and asked him, "Which is the best of virtues?" He replied, "Keeping trust in Allah (Tawakkul) and restricting one's hopes". Sufyan Thauri Rahmatullah alaihe says, 'Zuhd' (asceticism) i.e. renouncing sensual joys and worldly things, consists in restriction of hopes and not in eating thick bread or wearing rough and coarse clothes.

Dawood Taai Rahmatullah alaihe says: "If I hoped to live till the end of a month, I would regard myself a great sinner; how can I hope to live so long when, day and night, I see people being afflicted with sudden disasters?" It is related of Shaiq Balkhi Rahmatullah alaihe that once he went to visit Sheikh Abu Haashim Rummani Rahmatullah alaihe, who was his spiritual mentor. The Sheikh saw that he had something tied up in a corner of his winding-sheet. On his asking what it was, Shaiq Rahmatullah alaihe replied, "These are a few almonds gifted to me by a friend and I wish you to break your fast with these, this evening." Abu Haashim Rahmatullah alaihe said, "Shaiq, do you expect to live till the evening? I never thought you would think like this. I'll never speak to you again", saying this, he went inside and closed the door behind him.

Qa'qaa bin Hakim Rahmatullah alaihe says, "For thirty years, I have been waiting for death to come; when it comes, I shall have no desire to have it postponed." Sufyan Thauri Rahmatullah alaihe says, "I met a Divine in a Masjid at Kufah who said to me, 'For thirty years, I have been waiting for death to come; when it comes, I shall have nothing to say to anyone; nor will anyone have anything to say to me. For, neither I owe anything to anyone nor anyone else owes anything to me'".

Abu Muhammad Zaahid Rahmatullah alaihe says that he accompanied a funeral, and Sheikh Dawood Taai Rahmatullah alaihe was also accompanying it. When they reached the graveyard, the



Sheikh went over to a solitary place and sat there. Abu Muhammad *Rahmatullah alaihe* also went and sat beside him, when he said, "It is easy for him to understand this journey to distant lands (Aakhirah) who heeds the warnings given by Allah *Ta'ala*, but he, who entertains long hopes about the future in this world, becomes negligent in performance of good deeds. That which is bound to come (death) is imminent. My dear brother, take a word of advice from me; accursed is the thing that turns your attention away from remembrance of your Lord (Allah *Ta'ala*). One word more; all those who walk on earth must inevitably enter the grave and, at that time, they will grieve over what they have left behind just as they will rejoice over the things that they have sent abroad in advance (to the Hereafter). Now, just think! The survivors (the heirs) quarrel over the very things that cause remorse to the dying man, and file law-suits against one another". (*Ihya*)

Faqeeh Abul-Laith Samarqandi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Allah *Ta'ala* bestows four honours upon a person who restricts his worldly hopes, (i) He grants him the power to exert in devotions, (ii) grants him relief from worries, (iii) makes him content with small provision and (iv) illumines his heart."

The Ulama say that four things illumine a man's heart (with Noor). (i) an empty stomach, (ii) associating with the pious, (iii) remorse over past sins and (iv) restricting worldly hopes. And Allah punishes him who entertains high hopes about distant future with four types of afflictions: (a) makes him neglect the acts of devotion. (b) increases his worries about worldly things, (c) makes him ever greedy and anxious for increase in wealth, (d) deprives his heart of mercy and compassion. The Ulama say that four things breed hard-heartedness: (a) eating too much, (b) bad company. (c) forgetfulness of ones own sins, (d) high hopes about distant future. Therefore, man must not have great expectations about the distant future; he should rather fear lest he should breathe his last the very next moment.

A Hadith says that once Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said to Aishah, "If you wish to live with me, in the Aakhirah, be content with as many things of this world as are sufficient for a rider going on a journey, who stops a while on his way; and do not sit with the rich people, and do not regard a garment as useless, till you have patched it". Abu Uthmaan Nahdi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that he

saw Umar Radhiallaho anho on the pulpit delivering the khutbah, wearing a patched garment with twelve patches. (Tanbih-ul-Ghafilien)

① عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ قَالَ جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ دُلَّنِي عَلَى عَمَلٍ إِذَا عَمِلْتُهُ أَحَبَّنِي اللَّهُ وَأَحَبَّنِي النَّاسُ قَالَ ازْهَدْ فِي الدُّنْيَا يُحِبُّكَ اللَّهُ وَازْهَدْ فِيمَا عِنْدَ النَّاسِ يُحِبُّكَ النَّاسُ رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ وَابْنُ مَاجَةَ كَذَا فِي الْمَشْكُوتِ

#### HADITH: 10

A Sahabi Radhiallaho anho came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and said, "Direct me to an act of virtue, after performing which, I should be loved both by Allah Ta'ala and His men". He replied, "If you renounce this world, Allah Ta'ala will love you; and if you abstain from desiring what people possess, they will love you".

In the foregoing pages, we have quoted a number of Ahadith to the effect that Allah Ta'ala loves those who practise abstinence in this world and that, in the Akhirah, they will be raised to positions of honour. This Hadith, in addition, lays down that, as a rule, he who does not regard others' wealth enviously, nor feels greedy for it, can command their love and veneration. Everybody can verify this from his own experience. It is a common observation that some people have the most intimate mutual relations but, as soon as one of them asks something from the others, the relations are affected and the respect for each other vanishes from their hearts. It has been related in a Hadith that once Jibra'el Alaihissalam came to Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and said, "O Muhammad, however long you may live, death must inevitably come to you; and whatever deed (good or bad) you perform you will receive for it an equal recompense; and with whomsoever you develop your relations (in the world), you will be disunited and separated from him one day (i.e. either he will die and forsake you, or you will die and forsake him). Take heed; the nobility of a person consists in his observance of Tahajjud Salaat and his respect depends on a sublime in disregard for what others possess". (Targheeb). That is to say, a person commands the respect of others so long as he does not regard others'

wealth enviously. But as soon as he becomes envious, all his honour and prestige is lost.

Urwah *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "When anyone of you looks at the beauty and adornment of this world (and is fascinated by it), he should go home at once and ask his family members to stand in prayers (Salaat). For, Allah Ta'ala has commanded His Rasul *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* in the Holy Qur'an:

وَلَا تَسُدَّنْ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَاهُ أَزْوَاجًا هُمْ زُخْرُؤُا الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ إِنَّمَتُنْمِزُوقِيُوْهُ وَرَبُّكَ رَحِيْمٌ  
خَيْرٌ وَأَبْلَغُ ۖ وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا ۖ لَا تَسْأَلُكَ بِذَٰلِكَ تُرْزَقُ ۖ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۝

"And strain not your eyes in longing for that We have given to the people indulging in the world to enjoy, the splendour of the life of this world, so that We may try them thereby. The provision of your Lord (Promised to be given in the Akhirah) is better and more enduring. And enjoin Salaat upon your people (relations) and be constant therein". (Taha: 131-132)

And, in another context, Allah Ta'ala says:

لَا تَسُدَّنْ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَاهُ أَزْوَاجًا هُمْ

"And strain not your eyes in longing for what We have bestowed upon certain people among them to enjoy (i.e. the beauty and adornment of the world)". (al-Hijr: 88)

Commenting on these Ayaat, Sufyaan Ibne 'Uyainah *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "If a person who has been favoured with the knowledge of the Qur'an, looks enviously towards anything of the world (granted to someone else) he belittles the Holy Qur'an (i.e. is showing disrespect to the Holy Qur'an)."

Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: Poverty is commendable indeed, but only for him, who possesses a contented mind, does not feel greedy for wealth, takes no thought of what other people possess and has no desire to acquire property. And all of these qualities can only be achieved by a person who is frugal in his expenditure, spends on his food, dress and lodging only as much as is absolutely necessary, within the humblest possible means. If he requires something, he provides himself with as much of it as may suffice him, at the most for a month, never giving thought to what



he may possibly require after the month. For, he who thinks beforehand of what he may possibly need after a month, is deprived of the honour of contentment and falls a prey to greed and avarice. And greed (for man is greedy by nature) makes him addicted to bad habits and induces him to indulge in forbidden things. Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "If man were to possess two 'Wadis (valleys) full of gold, he would desire a third".

Abu Musaa Ash'ari *Radhiallaho anho* says, "A surah equal, in extent to surah 'al-Bara'at' was revealed to Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, which was abrogated later. I still remember the following out of its contents: "Sometimes Allah *Ta'ala* assists this Deen (Islam) through the people who have no concern with it (non believers and evil doers.); and also, if man were to possess wealth to the extent of two Wadis (valleys) full of gold, he would crave for a third, for nothing can fill the belly of a man (satisfy his greed) but the dust of the grave; but he who turns to Allah in repentance, Allah *Ta'ala* accepts his repentance".

Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "Two greedy persons are never satisfied: the man of learning who is greedy for knowledge (when a man has acquired a taste for knowledge, he is never satisfied but always craves for more) and the man who is greedy for money". Since greed is a fatal malady, which man has in his nature, Allah *Ta'ala* and His Rasul have repeatedly emphasized the importance of contentment. In a Hadith, Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* has been reported as saying: "Blessed is the man whom Allah *Ta'ala* has favoured with Islam, and provided him with a bare sustenance, with which he is content"

It occurs in another Hadith that once Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "On the Day of Resurrection, everybody, rich or poor, will wish he had been given just as much provision in the world as barely sufficed for his needs". For the same reason, Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* has admonished us against greediness and against exerting much for earning money.

Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said; "O people, adopt good means for earning (i.e. do not adopt unlawful means). For, nobody can get more than what has been apportioned for him which must reach him inevitably; and no man will die until he has received the entire amount of his provision". Rasulullah *Sallallahu*

*alaihe wasallam* also said, "If you observe Taqwa (i.e. guard yourself against all forbidden things), you will be the most devout of men; if you are content with your provision, you will be the best of those who are thankful to their Lord; and if you like your brother Muslim to have what you like for yourself, you will be a perfect Mo'min".

Abu Ayyub *Radhiallahoh anho* says that a person came to *Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* and said, "O *Rasulullah*, give me some brief advice (so that I may hold fast to it)". *Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* said: "When you perform Salaat, do so as though it were your last (when a man thinks a Salaat to be his last, he will obviously perform it with great sincerity and devotion and will take pains to make it perfect); and do not speak a word for which you will have to express regret (and tender an apology); and, with a firm mind, do not desire to get what other people possess (do not even turn your eyes to what men possess)".

Umar *Radhiallahoh anho* says, "Greediness is poverty (and makes one needy) and true riches consists in not coveting what others possess". That is, he who gives up all hopes of what other men possess, becomes independent of them. A sage was asked, "What is wealth?" And he answered, "Restriction of hopes and being content with what suffices for one's needs". *Muhammad bin Waasay Rahmatullah alaihe* used to eat dry bread soaked in water and say: "He who is content to eat this, is never obliged to depend upon anyone". Some asked a sage, "What are your possessions?" He replied, "Wearing an expression of self-sufficiency in public, restriction of hopes and moderation in private; and entertaining no hopes of what others possess".

According to a Hadith *Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* has informed us that Allah *Ta'ala* says: "O son of Adam! If you were to possess the whole world, you would not be able to eat more than what can satisfy your need. So, count it My favour to you that I did not grant you more than what suffices for your needs, so that you may not have to answer for it".

Abdullah bin Mas'ud *Radhiallahoh anho* says: "If anyone asks a brother to help him in his need, let him express his desire in plain words. For if you eulogize him widely, you will do him great harm (make him proud) while you will not get more than your portion allotted by Divine Decree".

It is related that the Umayyid king Sulaiman Ibne Abdul Malik wrote a letter to Abu Hazim *Rahmatullah alaihe* in which he requested, most earnestly, that the Sheikh should ask anything he needed at any time, from the king, who would be pleased to provide it for him. The Sheikh replied, "I put all my needs before Allah *Ta'ala* and I am content with what He has granted me for their fulfilment".

A sage has said, "I never saw anyone in greater sorrow than the jealous person, nor anyone leading a happier life than a contented person, nor anyone more patient than the greedy man (he is greedy for almost every thing, which he cannot achieve and, therefore, he has to exercise patience). And I never saw anyone leading a finer and more peaceful life than the person who has renounced the world, nor anyone more regretful than an Alim (scholar of divinity) who transgresses the limits of propriety."

It is said that once Abdullah Ibne Salaam *Radhiallaho anho* asked Ka'b Ahbaar *Radhiallaho anho*, "What causes knowledge to be taken away from the hearts of the Ulama (divines), despite their having gained a proper understanding of it and having retained it in their minds?" Ka'b *Radhiallaho anho* replied, "Greed, and asking favours from people".

Someone asked Fudhail-bin-Ayaadh *Rahmatullah alaihe* to explain the above mentioned remark by Ka'b *Radhiallaho anho*. He said, "When an 'Alim (Divine) becomes greedy for a worldly thing, he exerts his powers for achieving it and, thus, seriously harms his 'Deen' (religion). That is to say, he occupies himself with worldly cares at the expense of religious pursuits. Before long, his covetous nature is fascinated by each and everything of the world and he desires to possess all the things that catch his eye. Then he asks favours from men and bows to anyone who helps him in the fulfilment of his desires, obeys him, serves his designs humbly, salutes him when he passes by and visits him when he falls ill. And these salutations and visits are not motivated by the desire to please Allah *Ta'ala*, but by worldly designs. (For which, obviously, no reward is to be expected in the Hereafter)." In the end, Fudhail *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "This remark is of greater benefit than a hundred others, as it is a good exhortation to practise contentment".



Sa'd bin Abi Waqaas *Radhiallahoh anho* says that a person came to Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* and said, "O Rasulullah, give me some advice and make it brief (so that I may hold fast to it)". Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* said, "Give up all hopes of getting what other people possess (do not even turn your eyes to what men possess), and ward off greed, for greediness is instant poverty (when you are greedy and want to have a thing, you become needy even before the need actually arises); and do not do or say a thing for which you will have to make an excuse tomorrow". (*Targheeb*)

We have earlier quoted a Hadith, on the authority of Abu Ayyub *Radhiallahoh anho*, in which the same question with a similar answer has been reported. Both Traditions have a common theme, except for a piece of advice in each, specifically meant for the person asking the question in each case and, therefore, at variance with the other. Some versions of Sa'd's Tradition mention four items of advice (like the one given above), of which three items are similar to those mentioned in Abu Ayyub's version, and there is one more regarding greediness. (*Targheeb*)

As regard the advice to give up hopes of what others possess, which is common to both Traditions, this is very important indeed. For, only such people (who do not hope to get anything from others) are safe from anxiety and humiliation before others. Another Hadith reports Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* as saying, "If anyone is living at peace in his house, has been granted bodily health by Allah *Ta'ala* and possesses enough food for the day, it is as if he possesses the whole world". (*Targheeb*). True, if anyone possesses all these things, he has no reason to regard enviously any other thing of the world.

Abdullah Ibne Umar *Radhiallahoh anho* has also narrated a similar incident about a person who asked Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* for some brief advice. He replied, "When you observe Salaat, observe it as though it were your last (and you were standing before Allah *Ta'ala*); for, He sees you, though you do not see Him; and give up all hopes of what others possess, you will be the richest of men; and do not do or say anything for which you will have to make excuses tomorrow". (*Targheeb*)

It is related that someone asked Sa'd *Radhiallaho anho* to give him some advice and he said, "When you get up to observe Salaat, perform the 'Wudhu' (ablution) perfectly, for, Salaat without 'Wudhu' is not accepted, and there is no faith (Imaan) without Salaat; then, when you begin to observe Salaat, observe it as though it were your last; and do not make frequent demands, for, it is instant poverty; and give up all hopes of what other people possess, for, true riches consists therein; and do not do or say anything for which you will have to make excuses and apologize tomorrow". (*Athaaf-us-Salaat*)

Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Some people think that he who renounces worldly wealth is an ascetic (Zaahid); though it is not true. For, it is quite easy for any one, who hankers after public fame, status and prestige, to eat less food and to wear rough and coarse clothes. There are many pretenders to asceticism and renunciation (zuhd) who are content to eat little food and who keep their house-doors closed to the public or live in houses which have no entrance gates (i.e. refuse to associate with people). And by all this, they aim to achieve nothing but worldly fame. There are many who wear fine clothes and claim to have renounced the world (become Zaahids). They say that they wear fine clothes in order to follow the Sunnah of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*. They also say that they do not wear fine dress of their own accord, but because their friends and admirers insist on it and wish to see them well-dressed. The fact is that, when they say so, they are indirectly asking people to send them gifts of fine garments. These two categories of people want to gain worldly benefits through their religion. For, worldly benefits do not consist in acquisition of wealth alone; desiring the high status and good name of an ascetic (Zaahid) is also a worldly motive. There are three distinguishing characteristics of a true 'Zaahid' (an ascetic), which one should try to develop in himself:-

1. He does not take pleasure in what he possesses in the world; nor grieves over being deprived of the things he does not possess. Or, better still, he grieves over having worldly things in his possession and feels happy when he is bereft of such things.
2. In his sight, the one who praises him and the one who berates him are alike. Of these two, the former characteristic signify renunciation of wealth, the latter signifies renunciation of status and worldly renown.

3. He is possessed of a true love for Allah *Ta'ala*, enjoys intimacy with Him, and is capable of experiencing a peculiar bliss and sweetness in acts of devotion . (*Ihya*)

At this point, I would like to narrate two anecdotes from the lives of my own spiritual leaders, which serve as illustration of the perfections listed above.

First, I quote here a letter by our spiritual mentor and guide, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi *Rahmatullah alaihe*, written to his own spiritual leader, Sheikh of the Arab and the non-Arab world, Haji Imdaadullah *Rahmatullah alaihe*; May Allah raise him to still higher spiritual stations! It reads:-

"Your honour has deigned to ask this undeserving servant of yours about his spiritual condition. O, you, who are my protecting lord in the two worlds! What am I and what is my spiritual state! What good have I got to present to you who have reached the zenith of perfection! By Allah! I am ashamed to talk to you about my own humble attainments, because I am the most insignificant of your servants. But since you have commanded me I must comply with your behest.

"My esteemed preceptor and guide, so far as the externals of (religious) knowledge are concerned, during the seven years of my absence from your blessed companionship, more than two hundred students have received their final degree of proficiency in Hadith through this humble servant of yours. Most of these have opened their own institutions for teaching of Hadith and have devoted themselves to the revival of Sunnah of the 'Rasul Sallallahu alaihe wasallam and propagation of 'Deen' (Islam). I deem it to be the greatest honour, if it meets with acceptance by Allah *Ta'ala*.

"As for the fruits of inner perfections gleaned from my spiritual association with and service of your august self, I should add in brief: In my moods of divine ecstasy, I take no thought of receiving any benefit, or coming to harm through anyone other than Allah *Ta'ala*. So much so that, by Allah, I sometimes fear I have been detached from my own spiritual leaders. And I am least concerned with the praise or blame of anyone, considering my spiritual state to be far removed from praise or dispraise of people. And I abhor the sins and feel inclined by nature towards devotions, and I owe all these effects



to the illuminating benedictions of my association and spiritual link, at once imperceptible and asserting, which binds me to your illustrious self. It would be impudent and audacious of me to dilate further on this subject. I, therefore, request to be excused.

'Pardon me, O Allah! I have written this in compliance with the behest of my sheikh. I am a false pretender, the most insignificant of Your creatures. All these are Your favours to me. Only You exist. What am I? A nonentity! I owe my very existence to You! I am because You will to be so. To think in terms of You and 'I' is also an intricate way of ascribing partners to You in Your Attributes.

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

*I seek refuge in Allah! I seek refuge in Allah! There is no might and no power except in Allah.*

Kindly accept this from me with my excuses. Was-Salaam. 1306 A.H.

This letter was written seventeen years before the Sheikh passed away to the vicinity of Allah; one cannot imagine the spiritual heights which he might have attained after this period, considering that he felt beyond the praise or dispraise of people and that he did not even think of receiving any benefit or coming to harm through anyone except Allah, long before his death.

The other incident has been narrated by Amir Shah Khan in his book 'Ameer-ur-Riwayaat'. He writes, "In Sikandarabad sub-division, there is a village, which is called Hasanpur. I have also visited it. It is quite a large village--author). There was a time when this village used to be an estate owned jointly by Maulana Mohammad Ishaaque of Delhi (who was a well-known authority on Hadith) and Maulana Muhammad Yaqoob *Rahmatullah alaihim*. Maulana Muzaffar Hussain Kandhalwi says that these two brothers were very generous by nature and spent liberally. The consequence was that they seldom remained in easy circumstances and often looked worried.

It so chanced that, one day when they were living in Makkah Mukarramah, Maulana Muzaffar Hussain visited them at their house and was greatly surprised to see them unusually happy. They walked about in the house, carried books from one place to the other

and talked to each other in very happy tones like people who cannot contain themselves for joy. Maulana Muzaffar conjectured that some large remittance from India might have occasioned this unusual mood of felicity, but he, thought it worth while to learn the real cause. As he could not muster courage to ask the elder brother, he said to the younger, "Maulana ! How is it that you look so happy today?" He replied, "Our estate at Hasanpur has been confiscated. We are happy because, so long as it remained in our possession, we did not have perfect trust (Tawakkul) in Allah Ta'ala; from now on we shall put our trust in Allah alone".

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawai *Rahmatullah alaihe*, commenting on this incident, writes: "The incident is reminiscent of another similar anecdote from the life of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani *Rahmatullah alaihe* who expressed great joy on being told, by one of his attendants, that his costly mirror had broken. The attendant said, timidly;

از قضا آئینہ چینی شکست

*The China-made mirror has broken by chance,*

But the Sheikh added a rhyming line, quite extempore: "

خوب شد اسباب خود بینی شکست

"It's good! The means of looking at ourselves (with pride) have been shattered".

⑪ عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ مَا شَبِعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ خُبْزٍ شَعِيرٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ مَتَابِعِينَ حَتَّى قُبِضَ (رواه الترمذی فی الشمائل)

HADITH: 11

Aishah *Radhiallahoh anha* narrates that Rasulallah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* did not ever take enough barely bread to satisfy his hunger on two consecutive days, till he passed away .

*Note:* Such was the life of Rasulallah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam*! There are hundreds of Ahadith that give a similar account of his mode of life. Nowadays, we hear a lot about the poverty and starvation of the Muslim community but, one wonders, how few

men there might have been who could not get enough plain bread to satisfy them on two consecutive days throughout their life! The 'Shamaael-e-Tirmizi, quotes another Hadith on the authority of Aishah *Radhiallaho anha* to the effect that even the family of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* did not get enough barley bread to satisfy their hunger on two consecutive days till he passed away.

Ibne Abbas *Radhiallaho anho* says: "On many consecutive nights Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* and his family had nothing to eat in the evening and they had to go without food for the whole night; and Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* lived on barley bread".

Someone asked Sahl *Radhiallaho anho*, "Was not Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* accustomed to eat bread made from sifted flour? He replied, "I am not sure whether Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* ever saw sifted flour in his lifetime". He then asked, "Didn't you have sieves during the times of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*?" Sahl *Radhiallaho anho* replied that they were not accustomed to use sieves those days. At this, the person asked (in surprise), "How could you eat unsifted barley flour"? Sahl *Radhiallaho anho* answered, "We used to shake and blow the flour; thus the (big particles(chaff)flew away and we baked the rest". (*Shamaael-e-Tirmizi*)

*Note:* Today, we find it hard to eat wheat bread made from unsifted flour. The Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* used to eat barley bread made from unsifted flour and, even of that, they could not get enough to eat their fill.

Aishah *Radhiallaho anha* says, "When I have a full meal, I cannot contain my sorrow and burst into tears". Someone asked her the reason and she said, "I am reminded of the times of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* when he could never have a full meal of meat or bread twice a day till he passed away". (*Shamaael*) Sa'eed Maqbari *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that once Abu Hurairah *Radhiallaho anho* came upon some people who had a dish of roast chicken in front of them and were having dinner. They invited him to share the food, but he refused to do so and said, "Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* passed away from this world without ever having enough barley bread to satisfy his hunger. How can I eat chicken?" (*Mishkaat*).



**Note:** This is a general remark by Abu Hurairah *Radhiyallahu anho* and not a legal prohibition. For, there are authentic Ahadith to prove that *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* himself did eat chicken-meat.

Another Hadith says that *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* often remained hungry, even without being driven to it by necessity. That is, sometimes he ate very little, despite there being sufficient food to eat. For, the Divine light (nur) descends bountifully upon the hearts of those who keep their bellies hungry. Still another Hadith says that Allah *Ta'ala* takes pride in him who eats and drinks little in this world, and He says to the angels, 'Look! I tried him with want (of food and drink) and he remained patient. Bear witness; for every morsel of food that he could not eat, I grant him a high grade in Jannah' (*Ihya*).

However, one should not, of ones own choice, eat so little food as to leave him insufficient strength for the performance of religious duties. For the same reason, eating of 'Suhur' (a meal taken shortly before dawn) has been made a Sunnah for the month of Ramadhan, as it protects a person from growing too weak while fasting. And taking a short mid-day nap has been made a Sunnah, as it is helpful for staying awake by night and observing Tahajjud Salaat. *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "No full vessel is as bad as a belly replete with food . (i.e. filling of no other vessel is as bad as filling one's belly with food). But, since one cannot do without food, one third of the stomach may be filled with food; one third should be kept empty for water and one third for the air".

It has been related in a Hadith that once *Fatimah Radhiyallahu anha* brought a loaf of bread to *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* who asked her what it was and she said, "O *Rasulullah*, I baked some bread today, but I did not like to eat it without your sharing it with me". *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "This is the first thing your father is putting into his mouth after three days". (That is to say, 'I have not taken any food for three days together').

According to another Hadith, *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "Only those who remain hungry in this world will be repleted with food in the Akhirah and Allah *Ta'ala* greatly dislikes a person who eats so much that he suffers from indigestion;

and he who wishes to have something but does not eat, will be raised to higher stages in Jannah". Umar *Radhiallaho anho* says, "Avoid eating to repletion; for it causes heaviness in the world; and decay and putrefaction at the time of death". Shaiq Balkhi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "Devoutness is a profession, whose workshop is solitude, and whose instrument (with which a man of profession works) is hunger."

Fudhail *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to say, addressing himself, "Fudhail, you feel afraid of hunger, though it is not a thing to be afraid of. Insignificant man! Think of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* and the Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* who had to suffer from hunger" (despite their sublime spiritual ranks). He would say, sometimes, "O Allah! You kept me and my family without food, and without light during dark nights. I know it is Your way with the pious ones among Your men. What virtue of mine moved Your bounty to bestow upon me such a great favour?" (He wondered if any virtue of his was so pleasing to Allah *Ta'ala* that He had, in spite of the fact that he was not a pious man (in his own estimation), granted him the favours which fall to the lot of the pious ones alone).

Kahmas *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to say, "O Allah! You kept me without food, and without clothes, and without light during dark nights (I am not worthy of these favours). What moved Your bounty to bestow upon me all these favours?" Fatah Musili *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to say, when he was afflicted with some painful disease or, was suffering from pangs of hunger. "O Allah! You tried me with the affliction of hunger and disease and these are the things with which You try Your pious men. What good deed should I perform to show my gratitude to You for all these favours?"

Once, Maalik-bin-Dinar *Rahmatullah alaihe* said to Muhammad Ibne Wasi *Rahmatullah alaihe*; "Blessed is the man who gets a little produce (from land etc) which affords him a bare sufficiency and makes him independent of begging from people". Muhammad bin Wasi *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "Blessed is the man who remains hungry in the morning and goes without food in the evening and, still, is well pleased with Allah *Ta'ala*." It occurs in the Torah to the effect that, "When you have a full meal, call to your mind the people who are hungry . Abu Sulaiman *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "If I take a morsel less than what I usually have at night, I deem it to be more rewarding (for my soul) than a whole night of standing in devotions."

He also says: 'Hunger is a Divine Treasure available only to those who are the favourites of Allah Ta'ala.'

Sahl bin Abdullah Tustari *Rahmatullah alaihe* was accustomed to going without food consecutively for more than twenty days and his expenses on food were estimated at one Dirham (silver coin) a year. He often gave exhortations and talked at length on the merits of remaining hungry, so much so that he would say, "No other virtue can compare with that of eating only as much as is barely necessary, for in that alone consists the compliance with the Sunnah (Way) of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* in matters of food." He also says: "Wisdom and knowledge is gained through starving the belly: ignorance and sins are centred in repletion." He also says: 'No one can attain to the station of the 'Abdaal' (a very high rank of sainthood) until he cultivates the following habits: starving the belly, observing reticence in speech, waking up at night for devotions, love of solitude.' He also says, "He who remains hungry is least disturbed by the whispering and evil promptings of the Shaitan".

Abdul Wahid bin Zaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* would say: 'I swear Allah! Nobody's soul can be purified unless he starves his belly; and it is by virtue of hunger that the saints used to walk on water and are granted the miraculous power to traverse thousands of miles in a few steps (the charismatic power called "Tayy-ul-ardh").

Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that there are ten great advantages of eating less food:

**The first Advantage.** (of eating less food) is that it helps to purify one's soul produces alacrity of spirit and deepens one's insight; for, repletion causes dullness of mind and makes one's heart devoid of spiritual light (Noor). When the stomach is full, gases and vapours (rising from it) gather up round the brain and also affect the heart, with the result that one's mind becomes cloudy and slow in thought. If a young boy begins to eat too much, his memory grows weak and his brain becomes dull. Abu Sulaiman Darani *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "Make a habit of keeping your stomach empty; for this subdues the evil nature, softens the heart and helps in acquiring spiritual knowledge". Shibli *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Whenever I remained hungry, meaning thereby to earn the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, I found, opening up within myself, a new vista of knowledge and a deeper insight into the reality of things was granted to me."



It also explains, Luqman *Alaihissalam* advised his son, thus: "Sonny, when a person's belly is full, his faculty of reason becomes dormant, his wisdom becomes still and ineffective, and his limbs become slow in performance of acts of devotion". Abu Yazid Bustami *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Hunger is like a cloud; when one is hungry it sends down showers of wisdom upon one's heart".

The second advantage is that hunger softens a man's heart and makes it sensitive to 'Zikr' (Remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala*) and other acts of devotion. Sometimes a person recites the hymns with great concentration of mind, but his heart does not experience the bliss and other effects of Zikr. But when the heart becomes sensitive to softer feelings, it can experience the rapture of 'Zikr' the joy and bliss of importuning His favours. Abu Sulaiman Darani *Rahmatullah alaihe* says; "I derive greatest pleasure from my devotions when I am starving, with my belly totally empty". Junaid Baghdadi *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to say, "How can a person who hangs a bag of food between his heart and his Lord (Allah *Ta'ala*) experience the bliss of solitary communion with Him. (filled belly is compared to the beggar's bag, full of food)."

The third advantage of hunger is that it produces meekness and humility in a man, and sublimates his pride and vanity that would induce him to become heedless and transgress the Commandments of Allah *Ta'ala*. Nothing mortifies the baser self of man more than hunger. And, no one can have a vision of the Grandeur and Majesty of Allah *Ta'ala* unless he humbles himself, feeling insignificant in comparison with Allah. Therefore, everybody should make a habit of remaining hungry often, so that he can concentrate his thoughts on his Lord, intuitively. It was in view of this effect of hunger that, when Allah *Ta'ala* offered to Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* that the entire land of Makkah be turned into gold for him, he replied, "No, but I would like, O Allah! to be hungry and have enough to eat on alternate days; so that when I am hungry, I shall be patient and bow to You in humility (supplicate Your favours), and when I have enough food, I shall be thankful to You".

The fourth advantage of being hungry is that one is never forgetful of those who are suffering from misery and starvation. A person replete with food can have no idea of the sufferings of the starving and the needy. Someone asked Yousuf *Alaihissalam*, "You are the custodian of all the treasures of this land and still, you

remain hungry". He replied, "I fear lest repletion should make me forgetful of those who are starving". And, hunger and thirst in this world also helps to keep in remembrance the hunger and thirst that men will be made to suffer on the Day of Resurrection. A hungry man fears the punishment of Allah *Ta'ala*; he can call to mind how the inmates of Jahannam will suffer from severe thirst and hunger, how they will be given food that will be hard to swallow, and how they will be given as drink, the blood and the pus running from the wounds of those burning in Fire.

The fifth and most important advantage of hunger is its effect of protection against sins. For, all lusts stem from repletion, while hunger takes the edge off one's passions. A person's blessedness consists in his subduing his evil self, while his misfortune comes from being over powered by evil passions. As a wild horse is made docile through hunger, and becomes defiant and rebellious if it is given too much to eat, similarly, the evil nature of man can be subdued only by starving the belly.

Someone asked a Divine, "You are old and weak in body and, still, you do not take care of your health (you need to take invigorating foods). He replied, "Man's innate evil nature is quickly excited by passions; I fear, lest it should drag me into the bane of some sinful deed. So, I prefer to keep my nature subdued by mortifications, lest it should tempt me into a sin leading to damnation".

Aishah *Radhiallahohunha* says, "The first innovation (*Bid'at*) in Deen that started after the times of Rasulullah *Sallallahohun alaihe wasallam* is the habit of people to eat to the extent of repletion. When the bellies of men are full, their psyches are inclined towards the world".

And this advantage of hunger being a protection against sins includes so many other advantages, the least of which is one's protection against lusts of the sex and the desire for idle talk. A hungry man would never like to indulge in idle talk and, thus, he would be safe from the sins of back-biting, telling lies, obscene talk, maligning and vilifying others. On the other hand, a full-bellied glutton desires recreation and chit-chat.....and our gossip generally consists of slanders about the chaste and virtuous people. Rasulullah *Sallallahohun alaihe wasallam* said, "(Mostly) people are condemned to

Jahannam for the harvests of their tongue". There is no denying the fact that indulgence in sex is most fatal for the soul. Now, when a person's belly is full, he finds it difficult to contain his sexual desire; and even if he is capable of restraining it, through fear of Allah Ta'ala, he may not be able to avoid the sin of lustful gazing (at the person of opposite sex). Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "The eye commits fornication, as do the private parts". Suppose a man is able to close his eyes to avoid sinful gazing, the image of the persons on whom he chanced to cast a glance will still haunt his mind, and lustful thoughts will deprive him of the bliss of Communion with Allah Ta'ala, and may even distract his attention when engaged in observance of Salaat. Sins of lust and sins of the tongue have been mentioned by way of illustration; as a matter of fact, all sins committed by various parts of the body have their origin in a belly replete with food, which provides the necessary strength.

The sixth advantage of eating less food is that those who eat sparingly do not sleep long, but are granted the privilege to stay awake at night and engage themselves in devotions. He who eats much needs to drink plenty of water and so remains asleep for long hours. The divines say, "Do not eat much food, or you will have to drink plenty of water; then you will fall asleep and go on sleeping for long hours, which will cause you great spiritual loss." They say that seventy famous physicians are agreed upon the fact that drinking a lot of water cause a person to sleep for longer durations, and so a greater portion of his lifetime is wasted, not to speak of the spiritual loss of missing Tahajjud Salaat. Too much sleep also causes hard-heartedness and dullness of the mind. Moreover, if a man leading a celibate life or living away from his wife, sleeps for long hours, he will frequently be subject to night pollution and, in case there are no proper arrangements for taking a bath, he will often miss his Tahajjud prayers.

The seventh advantage of eating less food is that it facilitates standing in devotion for long hours: a heavy stomach makes a person lazy and incapacitates him from standing in devotions. The very act of eating takes a lot of time; and, if a person has to cook for himself, it involves a greater wastage of time. Then, after taking the meal, you wash your hands, pick your teeth (to remove crumbs from the teeth), get up from your seat time and again and go out to take water. If you add up the time spent on these various acts, you will realise how much time is wasted in taking food. How much more



beneficial would it be if all this time were spent in remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala* and other acts of devotion?

Sirri Saqati *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that he saw Ali Jurjani *Rahmatullah alaihe* eating a sort of mash made from barley flour and asked him how he had got used to that food! The Sheikh replied, "I calculated the time spent in eating a morsel from putting it in the mouth upto chewing, and swallowing it, and I saw that during this time, I could say: ( *سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ* ) (Allah be glorified) seventy times. For this reason, I have not taken bread for the last forty years but have been eating this mushed barley flour alone". The fact is that every second of a man's life is an invaluable jewel, which must be deposited with Allah *Ta'ala* in the treasury of Akhirah so that it may not be wasted. And the only way of preserving it, is to spend it in the remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala* or in other acts of devotion.

Besides, a full belly is a hindrance which prevents a man from remaining in the state of ritual purification (Wudhu) for long duration. He has to go to the privy and cleanse himself more often (perform Istinja) and, besides wasting his time, he cannot stay in the Masjid (continuously) for longer hours. Moreover, fasting becomes much easier for those who are used to remain hungry. In short, there are innumerable advantages of eating less food, for example, its helpfulness for fasting, for observing I'tikaaf (seclusion), for staying in the state of ritual purification (wudhu) for longer hours, for spending more time in acts of devotion. But all these advantages cannot be appreciated by the worldly-minded, who are heedless, who regard 'Deen' to be of little value, who are content with the transitory life of the world, knowing only about this world, with little knowledge of the Akhirah.

The eighth advantage of eating less food is that it is good for bodily health. Most diseases are caused by repletion and surfeit, for, eating too much causes such deposits to accumulate in the belly, and on the veins and arteries, which are harmful for the health of the body and which breed various diseases. Ailments and diseases, besides being injurious to health, prevent a person from exerting himself in devotions, distract him and divert his attention from contemplation and remembrance of Allah *Ta'ala*. Moreover, diseases bring in their wake a host of worldly encumbrances and worries, including medicines, precautions, visits to doctors and physicians, to undergo operations, or (as in olden times) getting a leech to suck

one's blood, thus causing great botheration and a lot of expenses, whereas hunger serves as a sure protection against all maladies. They relate that once Haroon Rashid, the Caliph, invited to his court four expert physicians from India, Constantinople, Iraq and Sawad.... and asked them to name a medicine which did no harm to any organ of the body. The Indian said it was the black emblic (myrobalan), the Iraqi named the wild rue (called 'Habb-ur-Rashad' in Arabic, 'Sipand' in Persian and 'Haloon' in Hindi) and the Roman suggested it was hot water which was totally harmless. The expert from Sawad said, "That is all wrong. Emblic is harmful for the stomach. (It is also harmful for the liver--Author). The wild rue is sticky and also harms the stomach, and hot water causes looseness of bowels!" At this, all of them asked him to name something which was perfectly harmless and he replied, "If you want to keep out of harm's way, you should not take anything until you have a good appetite and stop eating while you still feel like having some more". All the three doctors agreed with his opinion.

It is said that a philosopher doctor was told about a Hadith of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, which says that one should fill one third of one's stomach with food, keep one third of it for water and one third empty for the air. He was greatly surprised and said, "I do not know of a sounder and saner view about eating less food. These are, undoubtedly, the words of a great sage".

The ninth advantage of eating less food is the economy in expenses. A person who eats less food spends less money than the one who eats more. The latter, in order to provide himself with larger quantities of food sometimes adopts unlawful means or suffers humiliation through begging from people. (We have just given an account of Sahl Tustari Rahmatullah alaihe whose expenses on food amounted to one silver-piece a year).

A sage has said, "I often dispose off my wants merely by abandoning the idea of fulfilling them, which gives me peace and safety from distraction in devotion." Another sage says, "When I feel the need to borrow money, I borrow it from myself saying (to my own-self) that I undertake to fulfil this desire at another time". Whenever Ibrahim bin Adhem Rahmatullah alaihe asked the price of something and was told that it was very expensive, he would say to his friends, "Do not buy that thing, as that will make it cheap". (i.e. if you decide not to buy a thing, it is all one to you whether it is

cheap or expensive and you do not bother as to how it is selling) In most cases, it is greed that brings about man's damnation; and greed results from excessive indulgence in enjoyments of food and sex. Sexual desire is also an outcome of eating rich food. And in eating less food, there is protection against all these evils; may Allah Ta'ala grant protection to whomsoever He wills.

The tenth advantage of eating less food is that it enables a person to offer help in sympathy with others and to give away large amounts in Sadaqah. For, a person who saves on food can spend his savings as Sadaqah on the orphans, the poor and the destitute. This Sadaqah will provide him Shade on the Day of Resurrection, as stated earlier in a Hadith.

The excessive amount of food a person consumes turns into waste, while whatever is spent as Sadaqah is deposited in the Treasury of Allah Ta'ala for his eternal benefit. We have already quoted a Hadith in the foregoing pages to the effect that once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Man says, 'My wealth, my wealth', though what is really his, consists of three things: what he gives as Sadaqah and preserves for use in Akhirah, what he eats and uses up, and what he wears and makes wornout. All the rest is not his property, but is left behind for his heirs and he has no share in it". Besides, we have already quoted numerous Ahadith on the virtues of Sadaqaat. Each one of the ten advantages of eating less food, described above in brief, includes numerous other advantages.

One point, however, is worth considering, to which we have made frequent references in this book. Of course that there is no doubt about the virtues of taking less food, and, the fortunate ones are those who have, as a special favour from Allah Ta'ala, achieved this merit and enjoy perfect peace in their worldly and religious life; besides, these virtues will also help them to attain numerous benefits in the Akhirah. Still, every one should make allowance for his own weak body, lest, in trying to achieve too much, he may lose what he may have already achieved. So, a person should keep persuading himself to achieve these merits and consider them of high value but, at the same time, he should observe only such practices as his own humble powers permit. A patient who carries heavy loads hastens his own death. We have diseases of the soul and our limbs and faculties are quite weak. Therefore, though we should continually aspire for perfect spiritual health and do our utmost to gain it, we should



not do anything which might cause further deterioration in our spiritual health.

Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: "One should cultivate the habit of eating less food gradually. For, if a person accustomed to eat a lot abruptly reduces his food, he will find it hard to bear and will lose his health. So, one should cultivate this habit gradually and conveniently. For example, if a person is accustomed to eat two loaves of bread everyday, he should reduce his food by twenty eighth part of a loaf everyday, so that, after a month, his daily provision of food will be reduced to one half of the amount being consumed by him previously. And, if even this reduction is too much for him, he may reduce a fortieth part of a loaf everyday.

Sahl Tustari *Rahmatullah alaihe* was asked, "How did you start your austerities in matters of food?" He replied, "In the beginning, I used to spend three silver-pieces (Dirhams) on food every year. I bought a syrup made from dates or grapes for one Dirham, rice-flour for one Dirham and butter (or oil) for one Dirham. I made a thick mixture of these three and prepared three hundred and sixty sweet balls of dough. I fasted during the day and ate one such ball in the evening when the fast was broken". Some one asked him, "What is your practice now?" He replied, "There is no set routine; I just take something, at times". We have earlier referred to his habit of going without food for twenty days at a time .

Abu Zarr Ghifari *Radhiallahoh anho* is reported to have said: "During the times of Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam*. I used to consume one Saa' (approximately 3-1/4 Kg) of barley every week. By Allah! I shall never increase it till I die. For I heard Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* saying, 'Of you, the dearest and the nearest to me on the Day of Resurrection will be the one who remains, till death, in the same condition as he is today.' It was in view of this remark of Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* that Abu Zarr Ghifaari *Radhiallahoh anho* used to criticise some Sahabah to whom he would say, "You have abandoned the ways of life followed during the days of Rasulullah. You eat sifted barley flour, though it was not sifted during those times; you eat thin loaves of bread and I see many kinds of curries in your feasts, though you were not accustomed to such things during the times of Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam*".

Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "A Mo'min (believer) is like a small goat; a handful of dates, a handful of barley flour with a little water suffices him for food. A hypocrite is like a wild animal, who devours everything he can come by; he has little regard for his neighbours nor does he prefer anyone else's needs to his own. Give away, (O, Believers) whatever exceeds your needs as Sadaqah and send it before you to the Akhirah, (for it will benefit you)". Abu Bakr *Radhi'llaho anho* would go without food, consecutively for six days and Abdullah bin Zubair *Radhi'llaho anho* could go without food consecutively for seven days. It is said that once a Sufi Sheikh came across a Christian monk and held conversation with him. In the course of their talk, he also invited him to embrace Islam. The monk said, "Eisaa *Alaihissalam* would sometimes go without food consecutively for forty days; it is obviously a miracle and only a Nabi is granted such powers". The Sheikh said, "Do you promise to embrace Islam if I go without food consecutively for fifty days". The monk said, 'Certainly'. The Sheikh stayed with him for fifty days and did not take anything. He then said, 'These fifty days were in fulfilment of my promise; now, I shall do it for another ten days'. So, he did not eat anything for ten days more and took food after sixty days of starvation. The monk was greatly surprised and embraced Islam.

A Hadith says that: "If Rasûlullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* took a meal in the morning, he would not have food in the evening. And, if he took a meal in the evening, he would not take food in the morning." (*Jami-us-Saghir*). (That is it was his custom on some occasions.) The saints of earlier times also used to take food only once during the day. Imaam Raazi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "If anyone is accustomed to taking food once during the day, he should eat it before dawn so that he may earn the blessings of fasting during the day, and be better able to engage in devotions during the night when his stomach is empty. They say that Maalik bin Dinar *Rahmatullah alaihe* desired to have milk, but he restrained his desire and did not take milk for forty years. Once some one presented to him some fresh dates, but he gave them to his friends saying, "Have these dates, for I have not tasted one, for, the last forty years." (*Ihya*)

Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe* has narrated many such incidents about the self-denials of the great Divines. In fact, it was by virtue of these hardships that they were sometimes blessed by Allah *Ta'ala* with supernatural powers. Nowadays, everybody aspires to

possess them, but few can endure such rigorous self-mortification. How can we, who are accustomed to enjoy delicacies of food, think of such self-denials and hardships! It is said that a Sufi Sheikh invited a friend to a feast and put some loaves of bread before him on the table cloth. The guest began to turn over the loaves to select for himself a fine piece. The Sheikh said, "What are you doing? The loaf that you have rejected has such and such benefits in it; besides, so many workers toiled and laboured at it to make it reach here. The wind blew, caused the clouds to be filled with water, then it rained, the earth grew crops, men and animals worked in the fields, etc., to bring this bread and then it reached you. And, now you are selecting some loaves and rejecting others as bad ones".

It is said that a loaf of bread does not reach a person until three hundred and sixty hands have worked at it. First of all, Mikaaeel *Alaihissalam* measures out a set quantity from the bounteous Treasures of Allah *Ta'ala*, then the angels incharge of the clouds drive them to the fields; then the moon, the sun and the sky cause the crops to grow; then the angels incharge of the fields; and finally, the bakers work to prepare bread. Says Allah *Ta'ala*, winds cause the clouds to move; then the animals work in cloud and with absolute truth:

وَأِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصَوْهَا

'And if you consider a bounty of Allah and its details, you cannot reckon it.' (Ibrahim: 34)

Another noteworthy point about eating less food is that it should be done with the purest of motives, only to earn the pleasure of Allah, and not for show or winning worldly recognition, otherwise a person suffers from pangs of hunger but his soul becomes more corrupt, instead of being reformed. The Divines say that the one who abandons the joys of food, but falls a prey to the desire for show and recognition, is like a person who escapes from the scorpion but runs into the dragon's mouth.

In short, eating less food is commendable, as it is beneficial both for one's religious and worldly life, but one should take care lest it makes him too weak and guard oneself against other fatal dangers like hypocrisy etc. And, it is imperative to keep in view the way of living of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, his social behaviour, his poverty and his voluntary starvation. One should have sincere



preference for the life led by Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam believing a life of austerity not because he was obliged to live in poverty, but by his choice, made with his own sweet will and pleasure. A Hadith says that once Aishah Radhiallaho anha said to Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam, 'O Rasulullah, why you do not ask Allah Ta'ala to increase your sustenance and she burst into tears because she could not bear to see Rasulullah in pangs of hunger.' At this, Rasulullah said; 'Aishah, I swear by Him Who holds my life in His Hands, if I so wished, Allah Ta'ala would grant me mountains of gold which would go with me wheresoever I went. But I have preferred hunger in this world, I have preferred poverty in this world to riches and I have preferred sorrows of this world to joys. Aishah, this world is not suited for Muhammad and his family. Allah Ta'ala has commanded perseverance and patience to the most resolute and determined among His Ambiya, amidst sufferings of this world, and ordered them to keep away from the ease and comforts of this life. And Allah Ta'ala wants me to observe patience like them. He has said in one Ayat:

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعِزِّ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ

*Have patience, then, even as the resolute of heart among the Rasuls; had patience'. (Ahqaf: 35)*

And I cannot but obey the commandments of my Lord. So, by Allah, I shall observe patience to the extent of my powers, as they did, and truly it is Allah Ta'ala alone Who grants the power".

It has been stated that during the caliphate of Umar Radhiallaho anho, when so many territories were conquered by the Muslims, his daughter, Hafsah Radhiallaho anha, once suggested to him, that, when he received envoys from foreign countries, he should wear fine clothes and entertain them with good food and share it with them on the Maaidah. Umar Radhiallaho anho replied: "Hafsah, you know that the members of a person's family know more about his private life than anybody else. She said, 'certainly'. He said, "I put you on oath to confirm that during his Nabuwwat, Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam and his family used to starve by day, if they had food the previous night, and that they would not eat anything at night if they had taken food during the day. Tell me, whether you do not know that Rasulullah Sallalloho alaihe wasallam lived for so many years after being granted Risalat by Allah, but

he and his family did not have a full meal of dates till the conquest of Khyber. I put you on oath to confirm that once you laid his food on a sort of table raised above the ground, and when he saw it, his blessed face showed marked disapproval until it had been laid on the ground. I put you on oath to tell me whether you remember how *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* used to fold his 'Abaa' (cloak-like woolen wrap) and sleep on it during the night; how one night you folded it twice (to make four layers) for him and how, the following day, he told you to fold it once only, saying that its four layers had well-nigh prevented him from getting up for Tahajjud prayers. The four layers of the wrap made it softer and comfortable enough for sound sleep. I put you on oath to tell me whether you do not know that *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* used to take off his clothes and wash them himself; and that if *Bilal Radhiallaho anho* came to call him for Salaat when he was washing clothes, he would have no other clothes to wear and that he would go to the Masjid and lead the Salaat only after the clothes were dry enough to wear. I put you on oath to tell me whether you do not know that once a lady from the Banu Zafar (a tribe) prepared two pieces of cloth for *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* and sent one piece before the other was ready; and that he wrapped it round his entire body, binding it in two knots round his neck (so that it should not slip), and went to the Masjid to offer Salaat, wearing only one piece of cloth because he had no other clothes to wear on that day."

Thus, *Umar Radhiallaho anho* went on to recount incidents from the life of *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, till she burst into tears and he also cried so bitterly that it was feared, lest he would die of anguish.

Another narration has it that once *Umar Radhiallaho anho* said: "I had two companions, (*Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* and *Abu Bakar Radhiallaho anho*) who followed one and the same path. If I deviate from the path followed by them and follow any other course, I shall not be treated (by Allah) as they were. By Allah, I shall bind myself to lead a hard life as they did in this world, so that I may attain to the pleasant life being enjoyed by them in the Akhirah."

It occurs in 'Fatawaa Alamgiriyyah' (edicts of the Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir) that there are several grades of taking food: The first is eating as much food as is essential for life. This is 'Fardh'

(obligatory). If a person abstains from food altogether or eats less than necessary to sustain life, he will be regarded a sinner. The second grade is taking as much as can afford sufficient strength for observing Salaat while standing, or for fasting without much trouble. Eating this much food is commendable, and one earns blessings from Allah Ta'ala. The third grade is that of admissibility i.e. eating more than the commendable amount, specified above, to the extent of filling the belly for the strength of the body, which is neither a sin nor a virtue to be rewarded by Allah Ta'ala, though such a person will have to go through some reckoning, provided that he procures his food through lawful (Halaal) means. The fourth degree is that of overeating, which is Haram (unlawful) for everybody, except for two persons: the one who eats much to gain strength for fasting during the day, and the one who is taking food with a guest and goes on eating to allow the guest to have his fill.

It is not permissible to eat so little that one grows too weak to perform one's obligatory (Fardh) duties. And, if it is not so, then there is no harm in eating less; for it reforms one's soul and a person relishes his food more if he takes it only when he is feeling very hungry. Similarly, it is allowable for a young man to eat less food more for controlling his sexual desires. (*Alamgiriyya*). The author of 'Durre Mukhtar' and some other scholars have modified this gradation, to the extent that it is obligatory (Fardh) to take as much food as affords sufficient strength to observe Salaat while standing. The last paragraph of the extract from the book 'Alamgiriyyah (quoted above) also supports this view.

⑫ عَنْ عَلِيٍّ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ رَضِيَ مِنَ اللَّهِ بِالْيُسْرِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ بِالْقَلِيلِ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ. (رواه البيهقي في الشعب كذا في المشكاة)

#### HADITH: 12

**Ali Radhiallahoh anho** narrates that **Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam** says: "If a person is content with small livelihood from Allah Ta'ala, Allah will also be pleased with fewer A'maal from him." (*Mishkaat*)

The Hadith admonishes us to regard limited livelihood as a special favour from Allah Ta'ala. For, in such a case Allah, the



Sovereign of the universe, is pleased with fewer good deeds from him. On the other hand, if a person is granted bounteous favours, and grows impatient at any decrease, Allah *Ta'ala*, also demands from him that he should exert himself excessively in the fulfilment of his obligations and pay off what he owes. Obviously, if a servant is paid as much salary as he demands and, still, does not do his duties properly, everybody will call him disloyal and ungrateful. Strangely enough, the poor among us do turn to Allah and devote some time to His remembrance and offer *Nafl Salaat*; but the rich and those who have prospects of getting rich find it hard to observe even 'Fardh' *Salaat*.

A person can be content with limited livelihood if he is particular about five things:

1. He should cut down his expenses and never spend more than what is absolutely necessary. The Ulama say that a single person should have only one suit of clothes; he need not have more than one in his possession. Similarly, one can do with plain bread and a simple curry. *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said: "He who observes moderation in expenditure, will not become poor".

2. If he has as much money or food as suffices for his present needs, he should not worry about his future requirements and trust in the promise of Allah *Ta'ala* to provide sustenance to all living beings. *Shaitan* (Satan) tries to keep a person constantly worried about the future and whispers into his ears, "One must have some money in reserve for what may happen, demanding immediate attention and expenditure; one may suddenly fall ill; unforeseen needs may arise; and you may find yourself in trouble...and so on". Thus, *Shaitan* keeps a man worried about his future and puts him to hard labour, and he befools and ridicules a man saying to himself, 'Look at this fool; he is presently suffering pains from real hardships for fear of problems which are imaginary and absolutely uncertain'.

A Hadith says that once *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said to *Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud Radhiallaho anho*: "Do not keep yourself occupied with too many cares and worries; for, whatever has been decreed must happen; and whatever provision has been apportioned for you must reach you. He also said: "Allah *Ta'ala* gives a *Mo'min* (believer) his provision from unimagined sources". This subject forms the content of an *Ayat* from the Holy *Qur'an*.

3. He should consider the fact that, being content with little provision from Allah *Ta'ala*, one develops a sense of self-sufficiency and feels honoured for not being dependent on others. On the other hand a greedy and covetous person has to humiliate himself before others. So, one has to carefully choose between the two alternatives, both rather unpleasant, namely the choice in between begging from people and abstaining from good living. And the one who prefers a simple and contented life is rewarded by Allah *Ta'ala*, while he who begs from people will be punished in the Akhirah. Besides, if you beg favours of a person, you cannot dare to speak the truth in his face and, very often, you have to adopt a compromising attitude in religious matters.

Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "The honour of a person consists in his being independent of people". And there is a well-known maxim: "If you do not depend upon a person, you are his equal; if you ask favours of him, you are his bondsman; if you do him a favour, you are his master?"

4. He should consider the fateful end of the rich who were enamoured of this world i.e. the Jews, the Christians and the irreligious persons who lived in affluent circumstances. And, at the same time, he should think of the glorious future of the Ambiya and the saints of Allah *Ta'ala* and consider how blissful their lives were. Then he should ask himself:

'Do You prefer to be counted among the fortunate ones who enjoyed nearness to Allah *Ta'ala*, or do you wish to be like those irreligious fools who enjoyed riches of the world?

5. He should keep in view all the harmful effects of excessive wealth, described in the foregoing pages. If a person keeps these five points in view, he will be easily satisfied with a small provision from Allah *Ta'ala*. (*Ihya*)

, Abdullah Ibne Amr *Radhiyallahu anho* reports Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* as saying, "He is successful who is a Muslim, whom Allah *Ta'ala* has granted small provision and made him content with it". Fadhaalah Ibne 'Ubaid *Radhiyallahu anho* relates that once Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "Blessed is the man who, by the grace of Allah, has accepted Islam, whose income is as much as suffices for his needs and who is content with it." (*Targheeb*)

Abu Dardaa *Radhiallaho anho* narrates that *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "When the sun rises, it has two angels on either side of it who call out, 'O people, turn to your Lord and Sustainer. The provision that is limited and yet sufficient is better than the abundant wealth which keeps you occupied with the worldly affairs and causes negligence towards Allah Ta'ala'."

③ عَنْ مُعَاذِ بْنِ جَبَلٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَمَّا بَعَثَ بِهِ إِلَى الْيَمَنِ قَالَ إِيَّاكَ وَالتَّنَعُّوفَانِ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ كَيْسُوا بِالسَّنَقِيمَيْنِ. (رواه أحمد كذا في المشكاة)

### HADITH: 13

*Mu'az Ibne Jabal Radhiallaho anho* says that when *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* sent him (as a governor) to the Yemen, he said, "Beware of living in comfort and luxury, for the pious bondsmen of Allah do not live in comfort and luxury".

*Note:* When someone is appointed as governor or ruler, he can afford to provide himself liberally with comforts and amenities of life and it becomes easy for him to enjoy all kinds of comforts and luxuries. Therefore, *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* warned him in advance against indulgence in luxuries, when sending him to the Yemen as governor. There are numerous such instructions given by *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* and the *Khulafas-e-Rashideen* to the governors, which stress the need for abstaining from a life of comforts and luxuries.

*Fadhala Ibne 'Ubaid Radhiallaho anho* was appointed by *Mu'awiyah Radhiallaho anho* as 'Qadhi' (chief justice) of Egypt (Misr). Once a Sahabi visited him at his place, in connection with the verification of a Hadith. He saw that the Qadhi's hair was dishevelled and he was barefooted. The Sahabi asked him, "Why is it that I see your hair dishevelled though you are the 'Qadhi' of this province?" *Fadhala* replied, "*Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* forbade us to indulge in self-adornment." He then said, "Why is it that I see you barefooted?" The Qadhi replied, "*Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* advised us to walk barefoot at times". *Abdullah bin Mughaffal* says that *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* did not approve of combing the hair everyday. (Abu Dawood)



③ عَنْ جُبَيْرِ بْنِ نَفِيرٍ مَرْسَلًا قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا أَوْحَى إِلَيَّ أَنْ أَجْمَعَ الْمَالَ وَأَكُونُ مِنَ الْتَّاجِرِينَ وَلَكِنْ أَوْحَى إِلَيَّ أَنْ أُسَبِّحَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّاجِدِينَ وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ. (رواه في شرح السنة والونعيم في الحلية عن أبي مسلم كذا في المشكاة)

#### HADITH: 14

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam is reported to have said, 'Allah Ta'ala has not sent me any revelation commanding me to become a merchant and amass wealth. What He has revealed to me is, 'O Muhammad, hymn the praise of your Lord and be among those who prostrate before Him; And keep worshipping your Lord till the inevitable (death) comes unto you'.

**Note:** The revelation referred to in this Hadith is the last Ayat of Surah al-Hijr. The Hadith has been related through different chains of narration, by many Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum. Allama Suyuti Rahmatullah alaihe has narrated it in his book, *Durre Manthur*, on the authority of Abdullah Ibne Mas'ud, Abu Dardaa Radhiallaho anhum and Abu Muslim Khaulani Rahmatullah alaihe. Another Hadith says that once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "The best among men are two: the one who goes in the path of Allah, holding the bridle of his horse, seeking a chance of sacrificing his life; and the other who owns a few goats and lives unknown in a forest or on the hillside (where one can live in peace), observes Salaat, pays Zakaat and remains engaged in worshipping his Lord, till death comes to him and people receive nothing from him but that which is good". (*Durre Manthur*)

Those who have studied the life history of Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam know how he acted upon this commandment of Allah Ta'ala, till he left the world. When Allah Ta'ala increased his blessings upon him, he exerted himself more diligently in his devotions. Aishah Radhiallaho anha relates that when Surah al-Fath was revealed, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam began to exert himself more diligently in his devotions. Someone asked him, "O Rasulullah, this Ayat of Surah testifies that Allah Ta'ala has forgiven all your former and latter lapses, but still you take pains and exert yourself in devotions". He replied, "Should I not be a grateful bondsman".

Abu Hurairah *Radhiallahoh anho* narrates that when Surah al-Fath was revealed, Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* began to spend such long hours in 'Nafl' Salaat that his feet became swollen, and he increased his worship so much that he grew weak and thin like an old and dried water-skin. When he was asked why he took such pains, He replied, "Should I not be a grateful servant? Hasan Rahmatullah *alaihe* said that Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* was so diligent in devotions that he had become weak like a dried old water-skin. He then mentioned someone else asking the same question and receiving the same reply. Abu Juhaifah says that Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* used to stand in Salaat so long that his feet had become cracked. Anas says that Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* stood in Salaat so long that his feet became swollen.

There are many Ahadith to the same effect, and most of them relate that people were surprised at his diligence in devotions and asked him why he took so much trouble, in spite of the fact that Allah *Ta'ala* had given him a categorical assurance of forgiveness in the Holy Qur'an, to which he replied, "Should I not be a grateful bondsman?" (*Durre Manthur*)

Have we ever thought of offering two brief Rak'aat of Salaat, in gratitude to Allah *Ta'ala* for doing us a special favour? There are numerous Ahadith which relate that, when Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* got news of a victory, or heard of anything that delighted him, he would make a Sajdah in gratitude to Allah *Ta'ala*. Notwithstanding all this devotion, he had such fear of Allah *Ta'ala* that, as Imaam Bukhari *Rahmatullah alaihe* has related it, he once said, "I swear by Allah! I swear by Allah that I do not know, though I am a Rasul of Allah *Ta'ala*, what He will do with me or with you, on the Day of Judgment." (*Mishkaat*) 'I do not know' means; I am unaware of the circumstances we shall have to face on the Day of Judgement, because Allah *Ta'ala*, the Sovereign with absolute power, has every right to do with people as He wills.

It occurs in a narration that Umme Dardaa *Radhiallahoh anha* asked her husband, "Why is it that you do not go after money, as so and so does? (He earns money; you do not bother about it)". Abu Dardaa *Radhiallahoh anho* replied, "I have heard Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* saying, "In front of you would be a difficult valley on the Day of Resurrection, and those who have a heavy burden will be required to render an account of all their worldly

possessions, and they will not be able to do it easily. I, therefore, want to have a light burden i.e. I do not want to be involved in things of which I might have to render an account, so that I may easily pass through this valley." (*Mishkaat*)

These great people felt extremely afraid of what might happen to them on the Day of Judgement and, therefore, they were greatly concerned about the Akbirah and remained ever busy preparing for it. We, on the contrary, are constantly worried about this world and never, for once, think of the difficult valley referred to in the Hadith. They say that once Hassaan bin Sinaan *Rahmatullah alaihe* was going somewhere when he saw a house which had not been there before. He asked, "When was this house built?" But instantly he thought better of it and began to admonish himself saying, "Why did you ask this idle question? It is no concern of yours when the house was built. Now you will have to do penance for that and fast for a year". And he fasted for one complete year to atone for indulging in useless talk.

Maalik Ibne Zaigham *Radhiallaho anho* relates: Once Rabaah Qaisi *Rahmatullah alaihe* came to visit us after Asr Salaat and asked whether my father was at home. On being told that he was asleep, the Sheikh said, "Is this the time for sleep?", and went away. I sent a man after him with the word that, if he liked, I would wake him up, but before he could catch up with him, the Sheikh had entered a graveyard and was admonishing himself thus, "You said, 'Is this the time for sleep?'. What did you mean by it? Everybody is free to go to bed when he likes. How do you know that such and such time was not suitable for him to sleep? I swear by Allah that I shall not allow you, for a year, to lie on the ground to sleep, unless you fall ill or go mad; for in that case, I shall be helpless. Woe to you! How long will you go on upbraiding others? What a pity, you refuse to mend your ways!" He went on talking in this vein, weeping and crying in bitter remorse. When the man saw him in this state, he could not take courage to speak to him and came back.

Talha *Radhiallaho anho* says that once a Sahabi took his clothes off and began to roll himself on the burning sand of the desert. He was saying to himself, "Taste it and know that Jahannam is far hotter than this. You lie sleeping at night like the dead, and while away your time by day". Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* saw him in this condition and went over to him. He submitted, "O



Rasulullah, I felt within myself an urge to do like that. I can say no more". Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "You need not have done that; all the gates of the heavens have been opened for you and Allah *Ta'ala* is speaking proudly of you to the angels." He then said to the Sahabah, "Take your share of blessings from your brother;" and they asked him to make Du'aa for all of them. And Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* also advised him to make Du'aa for them.

Huzaifah Ibne Qatadah *Radhiallaho anho* says that someone asked a saint, "What do you do when your 'Nafs' (carnal self) desires to have something?" He replied, "I abhor my 'Nafs' more than anyone else in the world. How can I fulfil the desire of one whom I regard to be my worst enemy." They relate that once Mujammi happened to look towards the roof of a house and his eyes fell on a non-'Mahram' lady (a 'Mahram' is a blood relation not within permissible marriage limits). He thereupon swore that he would not raise his head to look up as long as he lived.

There are many other incidents about these pious beings, narrated by Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe*, which describe how severely they punished themselves for the slightest lapse. The reason was that they were afraid of the perils of the 'difficult valley' about which Abu Dardaa *Radhiallaho anho* was talking to his wife. But we, today, seem to assure ourselves that the Sahabah alone would have to cover this 'difficult valley' and we shall fly over it by 'plane'. We are doing a grievous wrong to our own souls and never for a moment think of the 'difficult valley' lying before us.

After narrating the anecdotes, Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: "Strangely enough, you punish your servants and your children when they do anything wrong and say to yourself, 'If I do not punish them, they will become disobedient and rebellious. But you do not care for your 'self' and never fear that it is growing rebellious. Don't you know that rebelliousness in others is not going to do you as much harm as rebelliousness of your own Nafs".

For, if others are rebellious, they can do harm to your worldly interest alone, but your own rebellious nature is doing harm to your life in the Akhirah, which is eternal and the bounties thereof endure permanently. What a heavy loss would it be, if you did harm to your Akhirah. Our forefathers were aware of this fact and, therefore, if

anyone of them missed an opportunity to do a good deed for his eternal life, he would be very anxious to atone for it.

Once, Umar *Radhiallaho anho* could not join the congregational Salaat for 'Asr' and, in order to atone for it, he gave away, as Sadaqah, a fruit-garden whose value was estimated at two hundred thousand 'Dirhams' (silver-pieces). Ibne Umar *Radhiallaho anho* would keep awake and stand in devotion for the whole night, if he chanced to miss the congregational Salaat on any day. Once, he became late for Maghrib Salaat and, in order to atone for it, he emancipated two of his slaves. If anyone is lazy or sluggish in devotions, he should associate himself with a pious person with deep devotion in the worship of Allah *Ta'ala*. If he cannot have such a privilege, he should study, with a receptive mind, the life histories of such pious people, with a view to instructively learning moral lessons. Many such anecdotes have been narrated by the author of 'Raudh-ur-Rayaheen' which has been condensed and translated into Urdu under the title, 'Nazhat-ul-Basateen'.

A great saint has stated, "Whenever I feel that I have become less active in my devotions, I study the incidents from the life of Muhammad Ibne Waasay *Rahmatullah alaihe* consecutively for a week" (likewise, it is beneficial to study biographies of the other saints, provided these have been written by trustworthy Ulama). An account of their diligence in devotions inspires a person with the desire to follow their example. Moreover, one should consider that all the labours and the pain they took in their devotions and other facets of life, have come to an end. And, they are now enjoying eternal bliss, living in everlasting peace and never-ending ease. How regrettable that we, notwithstanding our knowledge of their piety and devotion, are busy in worldly pursuits and in deriving pleasure out of the material world! It is pity we do not follow the example of those who have attained to a state of everlasting bliss.

Ali *Radhiallaho anho* says (Some authorities attribute the saying to Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* himself) May Allah have mercy upon those whom people regard as invalids but they are not invalids, in reality". Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* comments on this: They look like invalids because of their constant devotional practices.

He is also reported to have said, "I have known and associated with people who did not care a bit for the gain or loss of the world

and to whom the worldly riches were of less consequence than the dust that settles on the shoes. I have known people who never had any spare garment, to be folded and put away for use at a later time. They never expressed a desire for any special dish nor did they need a bed to sleep on; they would rather lie on the bare ground and go to sleep. They fulfilled the commandments of Allah *Ta'ala* contained in the Holy Qur'an and followed the ways (Sunnah) of Rasulullah. They would stand awake during the nights observing 'Nafil' Salaat, standing before Allah *Ta'ala* or lying prostrate before Him, while tears trickled from their eyes down their cheeks. Thus, they would stand their nights conversing with their Lord and Sustainer (an authentic Hadith says that he who observes Salaat converses with Allah *Ta'ala*), beseeching His protection against punishment. For every good act that they performed, they would bow in gratitude to Allah *Ta'ala*, take joy in it and beseech Him to accept it. And, if they happened to go wrong, they felt intense remorse, turning to Allah in repentance, and asked His forgiveness. Such was their routine all through life!"

Once Umar bin Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe* fell ill and many people came to visit him. One of the visitors was a young man, thin and weak in body, pale in face, Umar *Rahmatullah alaihe* asked him:

"Why are you so weak and emaciated?" He said, "It is because of diseases and ailments", whereupon Umar *Rahmatullah alaihe* asked for the real cause of his weak health. At this, the young man spoke thus, "I have tasted the joys of the world and found them to be awfully bitter. In my view, the beauty and adornment of the world, its pleasures and comforts are of no consequence at all. Its gold and its stones are equal in value for me. Methinks I see before me the 'Arsh' (The throne of Allah); I visualize the pious people being led to Jannah, and the impious being hurled into the Fire of Jahannam. Therefore, I pass my days without water (in fasting) and keep awake during nights in devotion; and I know that these amount to nothing when they are measured up against the bounteous rewards promised by Allah *Ta'ala*, or set against possible punishment".

It is said that Da'wood Ta'ee *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to take crumbs of bread soaked in water, that being the only meal he took everyday. On being asked why he did so, he replied, "By drinking this liquid food, instead of chewing and swallowing bread, I can save



enough time to recite fifty Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an". Once a visitor came to see him and told him that the beam of his room had cracked. He said, "I have not looked up at the ceiling of this room for the last twenty years." Not only did these pious beings avoid indulging in idle talks, but also abstained from idle gazing. Muhammad bin Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe says that he remained with Sheikh Ahmad Ibne Razeen Rahmatullah alaihe from morning till Asr (after noon) and saw that the Sheikh never looked this way or that. Someone asked him about it and he said, "Allah Ta'ala has granted us the gift of eyes in order that we may take a lesson from seeing His Majesty and Grandeur, manifested in all created things. He who cannot do so is not making a proper use of his eyes." The wife of Masrooq Rahmatullah alaihe says that his legs became swollen through standing in Salaat throughout the night. She says that, while he stood in devotions, she would sit behind him and weep, out of pity for him.

Abu Dardaa Radhiyallahu anho says: "If three most enjoyable things were not there, I could not bear to live in the world, even for a day: (1) the joy of spending a hot summer noon in thirst (while fasting); (2) the bliss of lying prostrate before Allah Ta'ala, in the later part of the night; and (3) the pleasure of sitting in company with the pious beings, whose conversation is interspersed with wise saying, that are picked like fruits of one's choice from a fruit-garden". Aswad Ibne Yazid Rahmatullah alaihe took much pains in devotions and fasted in the intense heat of summer, so much so that his complexion became dark. Alqamah Ibne Qais Rahmatullah alaihe asked him, "Why do you put your body to so much torture?" He replied, "I want it to attain a position of honour, on the Day of Resurrection".

The story is told of a saint who used to offer a thousand Rak'aat of Nafil Salaat standing everyday; when he felt exhausted, he would offer another thousand Rak'aat while sitting. And after Asr Salaat, he would sit in his place, with his head bowed in humility, and say, "O Allah! I am astonished at those people. how can anything other than You interest them. I wonder how their hearts welcome anything other than 'Zikr' of Allah Ta'ala!"

Junaid Baghdadi Rahmatullah alaihe says that he never came across anyone more painstaking in devotions than Sirri Saqati Rahmatullah alaihe; nobody ever saw him lying on a bed during the

ninety eight years of his life, except at the time of the illness in which he died. Abu Muhammad Jariri *Rahmatullah alaihe* observe I'tikaaf in the Holy Masjid at Makkah Mukarramah for a year and, during this period, he did not sleep or talk to anyone, nor leaned against a wall or a piece of wood, etc. Abu Bakr Kattani *Rahmatullah alaihe* asked him how he had gained the strength to undertake such a rigorous performance. He replied, "Allah *Ta'ala* looked within me and seeing the soundness of my determination granted me physical strength for this devotion". When Abu Bakr *Rahmatullah alaihe* heard this, he thoughtfully bowed his head for a while, and then went away, absorbed in thought.

A person who passed by Sheikh Fatah Sa'eed Musali *Rahmatullah alaihe* saw him standing, with both hands stretched out, in supplication to Allah, weeping bitterly, his tears trickling through his fingers. The man saw that the tears had a reddish tinge. He said to the Sheikh, "I put you on oath, tell me what calamity has made you shed tears of blood". The Sheikh replied, "But for your oath, I would never have told you about it. These are tears of remorse; I am weeping, for I have failed to fulfil what was expected from me by Allah *Ta'ala*". The man said, "How is it that your tears are tinged with blood?" The Sheikh said, "I fear lest my crying should be mere affectation and a hypocritical show of false feelings". The man further added that he saw the Sheikh in a dream after his death and asked him, "How did you fare during the Reckoning in the grave?" The Sheikh replied, "I was granted forgiveness". The man said, "What about your tears?" The Sheikh replied, "Allah *Ta'ala* summoned me and asked me why I shed tears". I replied that I wept out of remorse at not fulfilling my obligations to Him. Allah *Ta'ala* asked me, "Why my tears were tinged with blood. I replied that I was afraid lest my crying should be hypocritical. He then asked me what I expected through all that weeping and crying, and swore by His Honour that the 'Kiraman Kaatibeen' (recording Angels) had been presenting my book of deeds before Him for the past forty years, with never a sin recorded in it .

Abdul Wahid Ibne Zaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* narrates his own story, thus: Once I passed by a church where a monk lived in seclusion. I greeted him, calling him a monk, but he made no reply. After I had greeted him three times, every time calling him a monk, he turned to me and said, "I am not a monk. A monk is a person who is fearful of Allah *Ta'ala* and who is awed by His Majesty; who remains patient in afflictions; who submits to what Allah *Ta'ala* has decreed for him; who is grateful to Allah *Ta'ala* for His bounties; who bows in humility, keeping His greatness in view; who considers himself contemptible before the Absolute Honour of Allah *Ta'ala*; who surrenders to His Absolute Power, who humbles himself before His Sublime Glory, who lives in awe of Him; who is ever concerned about the Reckoning and punishments awarded on the Day of Resurrection; who fasts by day and stays awake by night, engaging himself in devotions; and who cannot sleep for fear of Jahannam and for fear of the Reckoning on the Day of Resurrection. He who possesses these qualities can claim to be a monk. I am not a monk at all; I am rather like a mad dog, confined in a lonely place so that I might not hurt other people". I asked him, "Why is it that people have dissociated themselves from Allah *Ta'ala*, though they are aware of His Greatness". He replied, "Love of the world and its glamour have beguiled them and caused an estrangement between them and their Lord. The world is an abode of sins. The really wise man shuns this world, turns whole-heartedly to Allah *Ta'ala* and he performs such deeds as may help him to be nearer to Allah *Ta'ala*."

Uwais Qarni *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who was a celebrated saint, would say, "Tonight is the night of Ruku (position of bowing in Salaat); and spend the whole night in one Ruku. On another occasion he would say, "Tonight is the night of Sajdah (Prostration)", and spend the whole night in one Sajdah. Utbah *Rahmatullah alaihe*, was a slave. After he repented of his past sins, he would remain so much engrossed in devotions that he would not care for food or drink. His mother once said to him, "Take pity on your self and rest for a while". He replied, "I am taking pains out of pity for my own soul; a few days' labour in this world may win for it everlasting ease and comforts in Akhirah". Abdullah Ibne Dawood *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that, when one of these great people attained to the age of forty years, he would roll his bedding and put it away.

Kahmas Ibne Hasan *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to offer a thousand Raka'at of Nafl Salaat every night. When he stood for Salaat he



would say to himself, "Get up, you who are the root cause of all evils and offer Salaat." When he grew very weak in his old age, he would offer five hundred Rak'aat every night. Thereafter he would weep and say, "I have been deprived of a precious half of my devotions," Rabe'e *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "One day I went to visit Uwais Qarni *Rahmatullah alaihe* after Fajr Salaat and saw that he was engaged in 'Zikr'. Not liking to disturb him, I sat there waiting for him to finish his devotions. The Sheikh remained absorbed in 'Zikr' till it was time for 'Zuhr' Salaat. He got up from his place, offered his Zuhr Salaat and then engaged himself in performing Nafl prayers, continuing in this state till Asr Salaat. He resumed his Zikr after Asr and sat in place till Maghrib. After Maghrib Salaat, he started performing Nafl Salaat again and continued to do so till 'Isha'. After 'Isha, he kept offering Nafl prayers till Fajr Salaat. Next morning, he sat in his place as usual and engaged himself in Zikr after Fajr Salaat. It so happened that, while the Sheikh sat there, engrossed in Zikr, he dozed off. Instantly he woke up and said, "O Allah; I seek Your refuge from the eye that sleeps again and again; I take refuge in You from the stomach which is never satisfied with eating". When I saw this state of affairs, I came back saying to myself, "What I have seen is a sufficient admonition for me."

Ahmad Ibne Harb *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "I am astonished at one who knows that Jannah is being embellished for him in the heavens above and also Jahannam is ablaze beneath him, and yet he goes to sleep". Once a person visited Sheikh Ibrahim bin Adhem *Rahmatullah alaihe* in his place and saw that, after Isha Salaat, the Sheikh went to bed wrapped in his woollen cloak and remained in that position till morning; he neither moved nor turned in bed throughout the night. Next morning, he got up and offered Fajr Salaat without fresh Wudhu. The man said to him, "May Allah have mercy on you! You kept lying in bed all night and yet you have offered Fajr Salaat without fresh Wudhu?" The Sheikh replied, "I did not sleep at all; I have been roaming in the Gardens of Jannah or walking in the depths of Jahannam all night long."

They say that Sheikh Abu Bakr bin 'Ayyash *Rahmatullah alaihe* did not go to bed for forty years. He once advised his son saying, "Do not commit any sin in this small room; for, in here, I have recited the Holy Qur'an twelve thousand times." And when lying on his death-bed, he said pointing to a corner of the room, "I used to recite the Holy Qur'an while sitting in that corner, I have made twenty four

thousand complete readings of the Holy Qur'an.\* Samnoon *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to offer five hundred Rak'aat of 'Nafl' Salaat everyday. Allama Zubedi writes that once a rich man of Baghdad distributed forty thousand Dirhams (silver piece) among the poor and the destitute. When Samnoon *Rahmatullah alaihe* heard of it, he said to himself, "I have no Dirhams, let me offer one Rak'aat of Nafl Salaat for each Dirham that he gave away. So, he went to Madain city and there offered forty thousand Rak'aat of Nafl Salaat.

Abu Bakr Mutawwa'ee *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that, during his youth, it had been his custom to recite Surah al-Ikhlaas thirty-one thousand times daily or may be forty thousand times; the narrator is doubtful. A person says that he associated with Sheikh 'Aamir Ibne Abdul Qais *Rahmatullah alaihe* for four months and, during this period, he never saw the Sheikh sleeping, neither by day nor at night.

A pupil of Ali *Radhiallaho anho* says: "Once Ali *Radhiallaho anho* led people in Fajr Salaat. At the end he turned his face to the right and sat there facing the people till sunrise. He looked cast down. At last, he turned the palms of his hands up as a gesture of regret and spoke to the people thus: 'By Allah! I have been an associate of the Sahabah of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, it's a pity that nowadays I find men who do not resemble them in any respect. When the Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* got up in the morning, they looked dishevelled, pale in face and covered with dust. During the night they would prostrate before Allah *Ta'ala* or stand in devotion reciting from the Holy Qur'an. They would spend the whole night standing. When tired they would lean to the right or left for respite, shifting the weight of their bodies from one leg to the other. When they recited lines glorifying Allah, they swayed in ecstasy, as the trees do, when the wind passes through them. And they wept (for fear or love of Allah *Ta'ala*) shedding tears so profusely that their clothes would become wet. Alas! men of today, spend their nights in utter heedlessness.

Abu Muslim Khaulani *Rahmatullah alaihe* had a whip hanging on the wall of the 'Masjid' of his house. He would say to himself, "Get up, for I shall keep you engaged in Salaat till you are tired and exhausted". And when he found himself slackening, he would lash himself with the whip on the calves of his legs and say, "My own calves deserve whipping more than my riding-horse". He would also

say, "The Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum* might have thought that they have excelled everybody and attained to all the highest grades of Jannah. No, we shall follow their example and exert ourselves to attain to a similar position, so that they might know that their followers were also valiant people".

Qasim son of Muhammad Ibne Abu Bakr *Radhiallaho anho* says: "One morning I went for a visit to my aunt, Aishah *Radhiallaho anha* and saw that she was engaged in offering Dhuhaa (forenoon) Salaat. She was reciting the following Ayat:

لَمَّا نَسَفَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَعْنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

*But Allah has been Gracious unto us and has saved us from the torment of the breath of fire. (at-Toor 27)*

I saw she was reciting the Ayat again and again and weeping bitterly. I waited for a long time but then I thought I had better go to the market first, get the things I needed and pay my respects to her on my way back home. So I went to the market, but when I came back I saw that she was still standing in Salaat reciting the same Ayat again and again, weeping bitterly!"

Muhammad Ibne Ishaque *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that when Abdur Rahman Ibne Aswad *Rahmatullah alaihe* came to Makkah Mukarramah for Hajj, he had some trouble in the foot. After 'Isha Salaat, he stood in Nafil Salaat, leaning to one side and balancing himself on one leg, and continued to observe Nafil Salaat till dawn. He then offered Fajr Salaat without performing a fresh Wudhu.

A Divine has said: "I fear death simply because, then I shall not be able to offer Tahajjud '(i.e. thus be deprived of the bliss of standing in Tahajjud prayers)". Ali *Radhiallaho anho* says, "There are four signs of pious men: their faces are pale from staying awake during the nights, their eyes look bleared with weeping during the nights, their lips are dry from excessive fasting and their faces betray fear of Allah Ta'ala." Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* was asked, "Why is it that the faces of those who frequently stand in prayers are invested with a peculiar grace?" He replied, "When they hold intimate converse with Allah Ta'ala during the lonely hours of the night, He, in His Infinite Beneficence, illuminates their faces with His Divine light (Noor)".



Qasim bin Raashid *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that Sheikh Zam'ah *Rahmatullah alaihe* was staying with his wife and daughters, in their neighbourhood at Muhassab (a place near Makkah Mukarramah) They saw that the Sheikh was accustomed to stand in Salaat for long hours of the night. He used to awake his wife and children for Tahajjud in the latter part of the night, saying, "Wake up, O travellers! Let us proceed. Will you lie sleeping the whole night through?" At his call, all of them would wake up and engage in different activities. One of them would perform Wudhu and offer Nafl Salaat, another would sit in a corner and weep from fear of Allah, still another would sit and recite from the Holy Qur'an. They continued in this state till dawn, when the Sheikh called them and said, "Rest a while, for those who travel by night take rest in the morning".

A Divine narrates his own story, "Walking through the hilly areas of Bait-ul-Muqaddas, I once heard the voice of a person reciting something. I turned and began to walk in the direction of the place wherefrom the voice was coming. Before long, I reached a grassy place and there I saw a person standing under a shady tree, observing Salaat. He was reciting this Ayat again and again.

يَوْمَ يَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّخَضَّرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا  
وَبَيْنَنَا أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا

On the Day (of Resurrection), when every soul will find itself confronted with all that it has done of good. (Every soul) will long that there may be a mighty space of distance between it and that (evil), (so that it may not see the evils of its own doing). Allah bids you to beware of Him. (Allah bids you beware of the Reckoning to be made, the explanation to be demanded on the Day of Resurrection and the Punishment meant for the evil-doers). (*Ale-Imran: 30*)

I sat behind him. I saw that he was reciting the Ayat again and again and was weeping bitterly. Suddenly, he uttered a loud cry of pain and fell unconscious on the ground. It was very distressing to me, as I thought that the pious man had fallen unconscious owing to the evil effect of my presence there. At long last, he regained consciousness and said, "O Allah, I seek refuge in You against those who shed false tears and make a show of feelings. (He modestly

thought that his weeping and recitation were feigned and affected). O Allah, I seek refuge in You from acting like irresponsible idlers who are heedless, who turn away from You in sheer listlessness. (Again, he thought that all his good deeds, his weeping, and crying, his recitation of the Holy Qur'an were defective and were performed heedlessly; he was modest enough to look upon himself as the most insignificant idler). O Allah! The hearts of the fearful bow to You alone in humility; and those who are negligent in devotions hope to receive mercy and forgiveness at Your hands alone; and the hearts of the gnostics (those who 'know' their Lord) are bowed with the true awareness of Your Majesty'. He then clapped his hands, in the manner of a person shaking dust off his hands, and said, "What concern have I with the world, or the world with me? O world, go thou to thy sons, to thy admirers, to those who set value upon thy riches and pleasures! Go and beguile them with thy treacheries! Go away and do not vex me". He went on to say, after a pause, "O, where are those who lived in the past ages? They have all gone to dust, have crumbled and decayed and become dust; and as time passes by, more and more persons are creeping to death and decay." At this, I said to him, "I have waited long for you to be free from your devotions". He replied, "How can a person like me have time to spare, while he knows that time is running against him. Naturally, such a one should make the best use of his time and should perform good deeds before it is too late, before death overtake him. Time is fleeting fast and the hour of death is approaching nearer. How can a person be free while he sees death before him, while he is aware that his lifetime is limited and the sins he committed have been recorded in his book of deeds". He then said, in an invocation to Allah, "O Allah, I seek refuge in You against the present disaster (the sins recorded in my book of deeds) and You alone are my resort against all disasters of the next world. (My only hope of salvation lies in Your Infinite Mercey). He continued to invoke the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala in this manner for some time and then recited the next Ayat:

وَبَدَّ لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَحْتَسِبُونَ

*And there will appear unto them, from their Lord that which they could never have counted upon. (az-Zumr: 47)*

The complete Ayat, of which the above phrase forms a part, is as follows:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَافْتَدَوْا بِهِ مِنْ سُوءِ الْعَذَابِ

يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَبَدَأَ اللَّهُمَّ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَحْتَسِبُونَ ۝ وَبَدَأَ اللَّهُمَّ سَيِّئَاتِ مَا كَسَبُوا  
حَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ۝

*'And though those who do wrong possess all that is in the world and therewith as much again, they verily will seek to ransom themselves therewith. And there will appear unto them, from their Lord that which they could never have counted upon: (az-Zumr: 47)*

While reciting this Ayat, he again uttered a loud cry of pain and fell unconscious on the ground. I thought that his soul had departed from the body. I went near him and saw that he was writhing in severe pain. At length, he came to his senses and, once again, began his invocation to Allah, thus: "O Allah, when the time comes for me to stand before You on the Day of Resurrection, have mercy on me and grant me forgiveness; and keep my sins a secret, veiling me under Your veil! O You, Who veil all unseemly sins of Your men from the sight, forgive me my sins in Your Infinite Mercy!"

I said to him, "O Sheikh, I beseech you in the Name of Him Whose Mercy you are invoking, to talk to me a while". He replied, "Please go and converse with someone whose words may benefit you. It is little use talking to a person (like me) whose sins have ruined his soul". He added, 'I have lived here for a long time which is best known to Allah and I am engaged in a combat with Shaitan. I defy him and he defies me. (He is all the time trying to distract my attention from contemplation of Allah Ta'ala . As he (Shaitan) could not think of any other device to distract me, he has sent you here. Please go away and do not be deceived by Shaitan. Don't you see that you have interrupted my intimate converse with my Lord? You have turned my attention to yourself and caused me to turn away from the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala . I seek refuge in Allah Ta'ala against the evil inherent in your soul and I do hope that Allah Ta'ala will guard me against His Wrath." When I heard this, I felt afraid lest I should have to suffer punishment from Allah Ta'ala for distracting the attention of His pious man from the contemplation of Allah Ta'ala. So, I came away, leaving him there, occupied with his devotions.

It is said that Sheikh Kuraz bin Wabrah Rahmatullah alaihe used to recite the entire Holy Qur'an three times daily. In addition, he remained absorbed in devotion. Some one said to him, "You are



giving yourself excessive trouble." He asked, "What is the age of the world?" The man replied, "Seven thousand years". The Sheikh asked, "What is the length of the Day of Resurrection?" The man said, "Fifty thousand years". The Shiekh said, "How can anyone of you refuse to work for one seventh part of a day in return for which he is promised ease and comfort for the rest of the day: ? So, it will be a profitable bargain for anyone who is granted ease and comfort on the Day of Resurrection in return for a lifetime spent in devotions, even though he were to live for seven thousand years, not to speak of the fact that the lifetime of a man is an infinitely small fraction and the life of Akhirah is eternal, continuing beyond the Day of Resurrection." We have given above a few anecdotes from the lives of the pious beings, by way of illustration.

Commenting on the stories, Imaam Ghazaali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: Such were the ways and manners of living of the great saints of early times. If you are reluctant to bow to Allah in devotion, study the history of the devout people who sacrificed their lives for the cause of Allah *Ta'ala*. Weigh in your mind whether it is better to follow in the footsteps of our pious forefathers, who possessed a profound knowledge of 'Deen' and a deep insight into the Akhirah, or follow the example of the ignorant in our own times who are negligent of their religious obligation. Do not leave the path of the wise and follow the example of the fools! If you think it hard to emulate these pious beings, regarding them to be men of exceptional strength, consider the following anecdotes from the lives of the pious ladies and try to equal them in devoutness. For, how unworthy is the man who cannot emulate even women in the observance of 'Deen? Now listen carefully:-

It is related of Habibah Adawiyya that when she had finished her Ishaa Salaat, she used to cover herself properly and stand on the roof of her house. She would then engage herself in Du'aa (Supplications) and cry aloud to Allah *Ta'ala*, "O Allah! The stars are shining in the sky and all the people are asleep. The kings have shut their doors and every body has retired to his private room, with his loved one. And here I am, standing before You, in humility." Saying this, she would start performing Nafil Salaat and continue in this state the whole night through. When the day dawned, she again said, in an invocation to Allah, "The night has passed and the day has dawned. I wish I knew whether you have accepted my devotions of the night. If so, I would have felicitated myself; if not, I would have

mourned my loss. By Your Honour, I shall persist in devotions, even though You turn me away from Your door, and shall never be disappointed, for, I know Your Magnanimity and Your Forgiveness

They say that 'Ujrah *Rahmatullah alaiha* was blind, and yet she used to stay awake during the whole night and when the day dawned, she said to Allah, in very sad tones, "O my Allah! A number of Your devout men must have spent the lonely hours of this dark night in devotions, seeking nearness to You and trying to excel one another in the struggle to win Your Blessings and Your Forgiveness. O Allah! I beseech You and no one else, to count me among those who have excelled others and grant me entry into the choicest places in heaven. O Allah! Raise me to the rank of Your favourite beings who have attained intimacy with You and count me as one of Your pious servants. O Allah! You are the most Merciful of all who show mercy, You are far above all others who have high ranks, You are the most Magnanimous of all who show magnanimity, O Thou! Who art the Lord of Infinite Bounty, have mercy on me. Saying this, she would lie prostrate before Allah, and her weeping could be heard. She continued in this state till it was dawn.

Yahya bin Bastaam *Rahmatullah alaihe* has narrated the following story about a pious lady, "We used to visit Sha'wanah *Rahmatullah alaiha* and saw her weeping bitterly. Once, I suggested to one of my friends that we should see her alone and persuade her not to weep so much. He agreed and we met her when she was alone. We said to her, "If you have mercy on yourself and do not cry so much, it will be better for the strength of your body and you will be able to employ it in devotions for a longer time". Hearing this, she burst into tears and said, "I wish I could weep till my eyes become dry and then, if I could, I would shed tears of blood. I wish that I could weep till all my blood flowed through the eyes in tears! Ah! I do not know how to weep and cry unto Allah! I do not know how to weep and cry". She went on repeating the words again and again, till she fell unconscious on the ground.

Muhammad bin Mu'az *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that a devout lady narrated to him the following story: I saw in a dream that I was going to enter Jannah and when I reached the entrance, I saw that so many people had assembled there. I asked, "Why have they assembled at the gate?" A man replied, "A lady is coming to Jannah and they have decorated it for her sake; they have come to receive

her into the Jannah". I asked who the lady was, and the man said, "She is a dark-complexioned bonds-woman from Aikah town, called Sha'wanah. I said, "By Allah! She is my sister". Meanwhile, I saw that Sha'wanah was coming to us. She was riding a handsome high-bred she-camel, which was flying in the air. I called out her name and said, "My dear sister, you know that we are related to each other. Make Du'aa (supplication) to your Lord that He may grant me your companionship. She smiled and said, "The time has not yet come for you to join me; but do take a few words of advice from me; make Akhirah your constant worry and take it to your heart; let your love for Allah overpower all other passions and desires; and do not bother about your hour of death i.e. be prepared to meet death at any time".

A Divine narrates, "One day I went to the Bazar with my Abyssinian bondswoman. When we reached there, I left her in a place saying, 'I will be here soon; please sit here and do not go away'. But when I came back, after a while, I found that the maid was not there. I was greatly annoyed and I returned in an angry mood. When I reached home, I found that she was already there. She saw my angry look and said, 'O master, don't be so quick to take offence. Just listen to what I have to say. As a matter of fact, you left me in the midst of people who were absolutely negligent in the remembrance of Allah. I feared lest they should be swallowed up by the ground; a place where no one is engaged in the remembrance (Zikr) of Allah is likely to be visited by a calamity at any time'. I wondered at her talking like that and I set her free. She said, 'O master, you have not treated me fairly'. 'How is that?', I asked, and she replied, 'When I was a bondswoman, I was receiving double reward from Allah Ta'ala. Now that you have set me free, my reward has been reduced by one half. A Hadith says that, if a slave is obedient to Allah Ta'ala and also serves his master, he is granted double reward for his virtuous deeds."

Khawas *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who is a well-known spiritual leader, has narrated the following story, "Once we visited Rahlah Aabidah *Rahmatullah alaiha* in her place. We saw that her complexion had become dark with excessive fasting, her legs had been disabled and she used to pray while sitting. Her eyes had become blind with crying unto Allah Ta'ala. While we sat there, we began to talk of the Mercy and Forgiveness of Allah Ta'ala, so that she might take less pains and reduce her austerities. But she burst



out crying and said, 'My knowledge of my own state pains my heart and torments my soul . Would that I had not been born.' Saying this, she began her Salaat again.\*

We have selected a few anecdotes, by way of illustration. Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* has narrated many such stories about the pious ladies and, thereafter, he says: "If you want to guard yourself against heedlessness, you must make a profound study of the lives and circumstances of these devout men and women who laboured so diligently at their devotions. For, the accounts of their devotional practices, if read carefully, will create within you the devotional spirit and make you work harder. And do not take notice of the poor condition (in religious matters) of your own contemporaries. For, most of them are so far gone, that to follow them is to move away from the path of virtue. There are numerous other incidents about the pious men who laboured at their devotions, but we have narrated only a few stories which should suffice for those who take heed and want to follow their example." If you want to learn more about their lives, I suggest that you should study, from time to time, the book entitled '*Hilyat-ul-Auliya*' (Ornaments for the Saints) which contains detailed accounts of the lives and devotions of the Sahabah *Radhiallaho anhum*, the Tabi'een (i.e. the Followers of the Sahabah) and the saints of latter days.

Some other instructive anecdotes appear in the '*Commentary on Ihya-ul-Uloom*'. A glance at their lives will reveal to you by contrast, how far removed you and your contemporaries are from the true religion . But you might say, "Those were the blessed times of abundant virtue and it was easy for people to occupy themselves with such devotional exercises, but anyone trying to follow their example in the present age is sure to be called mad. We should not, therefore, go against the spirit of our own age, for, we are going to meet the same doom as everybody else will; and nobody can escape a disaster when it is widespread". Now this sort of reasoning is sheer delusion and one is led into such wrong notions by one's evil self. Just consider the following example: Suppose a village is suddenly engulfed by flood-water and people are being swept away by the flood. One of the villagers knows how to swim or can escape death by some other means. Do you think he will not try to save himself, simply because he finds everybody else in misery? Now compare the suffering caused by the flood which is short-lived and lasts, at the most, till the death of the sufferer, with the everlasting punishment

in Akhirah. You should try to understand this example clearly and should always keep it in your mind". (*Ihya*)

Someone asked Ibrahim bin Adhem *Rahmatullah alaihe*, "Could you spare some time for us, so that we might sit in your company and listen to your blessed discourse?" The sheikh replied, "At present, I have no time to spare, because I am deeply concerned about four things which keep my mind occupied viz:-

- (i) When the Covenant was made on the first day of creation, Allah *Ta'ala* decreed that a section of mankind will go to Jannah and a section will go to Jahannam; I am constantly worried as to which of these two sections I belong to.
- (ii) When a baby is formed in its mother's womb, the angel, who has been put in charge of the sperm, asks Allah *Ta'ala*, 'Shall I record it as a blessed soul or an accursed one?' The thought whether or not I have been recorded as a blessed soul keeps me constantly worried.
- (iii) When the Angel of Death takes away the soul of a person, he (the angel) asks Allah *Ta'ala*, 'Shall I place it with the souls of the Mo'mineen (believers) or with those of kafirs (non-believers)?' I am deeply concerned about my own self, because I do not know what command will be given to the angel with regard to my soul.
- (iv) A proclamation will be made on the Day of Resurrection:

وَأْمَارُوا الْيَوْمَ أَتَاهَا السُّرْمُونَ

'Get yourself apart, O you who are guilty' (*Yaa-Seen: 59*)

I am very much concerned about my own fate, because I do not know whether I shall be found guilty or innocent". (This story has been extracted from "Tanbeeh-ul-Ghaafileen). The Sheikh meant to say that, so long as his mind was preoccupied with these constant worries, he could not afford to sit in company with his friends and have care free conversation. He could not live in peace until he was free from these cares.

⑤ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَيِّنَ الْفِتَنِ عَنْ مَكْثَرَةِ الْعَرَضِ وَلَيْسَ الْغِنَى غِنَى النَّفْسِ. رَمَتْهُ عَلَيْهِ كَذَابُ

## HADITH: 15

**Abu Hurairah Radhiallaho anho narrates that Rasul-ullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam says that true riches (Ghinaa) do not consist in abundance of wealth, but result from a contented mind. (Mishkaat)**

**Note:** The meaning of the Hadith is quite clear; however rich a person may be, if he does not possess a contented mind, he would be even less willing than the poor people to spend money. And the richer he grows, the more covetous he becomes and always remains more deeply worried than the poor. On the other hand, if a person possesses a contented mind, a bare sufficiency may keep him free from worries and he is least concerned about increase in the little wealth he possesses. Imaam Raghīb *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes: "In Arabic, the word 'Ghina' is used to convey various meanings. It may mean absolute independence in this sense, 'Ghina' is an Attribute of Allah *Ta'ala*, Who Alone is 'Ghani' or 'Absolutely free from want,' because He does not stand in need of anything whatsoever. In the following Ayat from the Holy Qur'an, the word has been used in this sense:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ۝

**"O mankind! You are the needy in (your) relation to Allah. And Allah! He is Absolute (Ghani), the Owner of Praise. (al-Faatir: 15)**

The word may also denote 'the state of having few needs', and it has been used in this sense in the Surah Ad-Dhuha, wherein Allah *Ta'ala* says, addressing Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam:

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ

**'He, Allah, found you destitute and bestowed 'Ghina' upon you'. (ad-Duha: 8)**

In the aforesaid Hadith, the word carries the same meaning (viz. true riches consist in possessing a contented mind). 'Ghina' may also mean 'affluence and abundance of worldly goods', as exemplified in the following Ayat from the Holy Qura'n:

يَعْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ تَتَرَفُّهُمْ بِيَعِهِمْ



*(Sadaqah) is for the poor who are in straitened circumstances in the cause of Allah, who cannot travel in the land. The unthinking man regards them to be well off (possessing Ghina), because of their restraint (in not begging of men). (al-Baqarah: 273)*

Abu Zarr Ghifari *Radhiallaho anho* narrates, "Once Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* asked me, 'Abu Zarr, do you think riches ('Ghina') consist in abundance of wealth?' I replied, 'Certainly'. He then asked, 'Do you think poverty consists in having little money?' and I again replied, 'Certainly'. Then Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, 'True riches (self-satisfaction regarding money) arises out of a contented heart and poverty consists in possessing a discontented heart'. (*Targheeb*). Indeed, true riches consist in contentment. Blessed are those who have been granted this excellence by Allah *Ta'ala*; therein lies the essence of asceticism and renunciation. A person whose heart is not enamoured of wealth is really a 'rich' man; he is the perfect 'Zahid' (an ascetic) and it makes little difference whether he possesses money or not. And he who is enamoured of worldly wealth is in fact poor because he is always desiring more, and it makes little difference how much money he possesses.

Faqih Abdul-Laith *Rahmatullah alaihe* narrates that a sage once said to him; "We searched for four things, but we went astray in our quest for them. We sought 'Ghina' (Self-satisfaction) in wealth, but we discovered that it consisted in contentment; we expected to find ease and comfort in affluence, but we found that real ease and comfort lay in having few possessions; we sought to achieve prestige and honour through the people (trying to please them for winning their favour and recognition), but we discovered that one can command respect of the people only through piety; we sought the Bounties of Allah *Ta'ala*, thinking wrongly that they consisted in delicacies of food and drinks, but we discovered that the great Bounties of Allah *Ta'ala* are two: (i) His guiding a person to embrace Islam (ii) His veiling the sins of His servants from the eyes of the people. (Those who have been granted these two blessings are the most highly favoured men of Allah *Ta'ala*)". In the foregoing pages, we have quoted a Hadith to the following effect: "He who makes this world his ultimate aim in life, Allah *Ta'ala* afflicts him with three things:-

- (a) an anxiety that has no end, (b) an occupation that leaves

him no spare time, (c) a poverty which keeps him discontented forever". (*Tambeeh-ul-Ghafileen*)

According to another Hadith, *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "When you see the person whom Allah Ta'ala has granted a disregard for worldly things and reticence in speech, associate with him, for he has been granted wisdom". (*Mishkaat*)

①٦ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا انْظَرُ أَحَدُكُمْ إِلَى مَنْ فَضَّلَ عَلَيْهِ فِي الْمَالِ وَالْخَلْقِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ أَسْفَلُ مِنْهُ. (متفق عليه كذا في المشكوة)

#### HADITH: 16

*Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "When anyone of you looks at someone who is superior to him in wealth or in good looks, he should also look at someone who is inferior to him in these respects".

The Hadith may be explained further by an example: Suppose you come across a millionaire and feel envious of his fortune, saying regretfully to yourself, "This man has been granted abundant wealth, while I have but little money". Then, at the same time, you should also think of a person who is even poorer than yourself and has often to go without food. If you do so, your regret for your poverty will be replaced by gratefulness to Allah Ta'ala for having saved you from starvation.

Another Hadith says: "Do not look at those who are superior to you in wealth, but look at those who are inferior to you; that will keep you from belittling those favours that Allah Ta'ala has bestowed upon you". (*Mishkaat*)

Abu Zarr Ghifari *Radhiallaho anho* narrates: "My dearest friend *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* advised me to observe seven things: (1) he commanded me to love the poor and keep their company; (2) he commanded me not to look at those who are superior to me (in wealth) and advised me to look at those who are inferior to me in this respect; (3) he commanded me to join ties of relationship, even when the relatives turn away from me; (the version in

Targheeb-wa-Tarheeb has: even when the relatives do me wrong); (4) he commanded me not to ask anyone for anything; (5) he commanded me to speak the truth even if it is bitter; (6) he commanded me not to care for the reproach of anyone while I am engaged in seeking the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala; (7) he commanded me to recite this phrase frequently:

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

*There is no might and no power except in Allah,*

for, he said, these words have come down from a Treasure just under Allah's Throne (The 'Arsh'). (Mishkaat) There are several narrations regarding the importance of reciting this Ayat frequently.

It has been narrated in another Hadith that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "A person who possesses two characteristics will be counted by Allah Ta'ala among those who are patient and grateful to Him: he who looks up to his superiors in religious matters and tries to follow their example; and he who looks at those who are inferior to him in worldly matters and feels grateful to Allah Ta'ala for bestowing His Bounties. Such a person will be recorded as a patient and grateful person. But he who looks at his inferiors in matters of religion (and considers that so-and-so is not half as good as I am, in performance of virtues') and is jealous of those who are superior to him in worldly matters, grieving over what has not been granted to him, such a one will not be recorded by Allah Ta'ala as a grateful or patient person." (Mishkaat)

Aun bin Abdullah Rahmatullah alaihe says that he used to sit in company with rich people and was always grieving. The reason was that when he saw someone dressed in fine clothes, or riding an excellent horse, better than his own, he was filled with grief because he felt inferior to other people. Then he began to associate with poor people and this painful feeling of inferiority disappeared, because he saw that his own dress and riding beast, etc., were superior to theirs. (Ihya)

The Ulama advise that one should marry a woman who is poorer than oneself, and not a wealthy woman. For, he who marries a prosperous woman, will have to bear many hardships, for example: (i) He will have to settle a large amount as a dower. (ii) It will take



a long time before she joins her husband, because her parents will delay sending her to his house and offer many excuses. (iii) He will feel shy of asking her to serve him. (iv) She will demand large amounts of money for expenses. (v) If he wants to divorce her, he will not be able to do so, for fear of losing the fortune that she possesses. They say that a wife should preferably be inferior to her husband in four things, or else he will not command her respect: age, height, wealth, lineage. And she should be superior to her husband with regard to four things: beauty, manners, peity, good habits. (*Thyaa*)

Once a person came to a Sufi Sheikh and complained to him about his own poverty, saying that he was in great distress and would prefer death to such a life. The Sheikh said to him, "Are you willing to have your eyes taken out in exchange for ten thousand Dirhams." He replied, "Certainly not." The Sheikh said "Would you like to have your tongue plucked out and get ten thousand Dirhams in return?" The man said, "Of course not." The Sheikh said, "Would you agree to having both your hands and feet cut off in return for twenty thousand Dirhams". The man said that he would not. The Sheikh asked, "Are you willing to be made a mad man and get ten thousand Dirhams in return?" The man said that he was not willing. At this, the Sheikh said to him, "Are you not ashamed of yourself? You admit that Allah *Ta'ala* has granted you so many precious gifts, the value whereof, in your own estimation, exceeds fifty thousand Dirhams (counting only a few gifts, by way of illustration) and yet you complain of poverty!"

It is said that once *Ibne Sammak Rahmatullah alaihe* paid a visit to a king. It so chanced that, when the Sheikh greeted him, the king was holding a tumbler of water in his hand. He said to the Sheikh, "Give me a word of advice". The Sheikh said, "Supposing this tumbler of water could be had only at the cost of your entire kingdom and you had to choose between dying of thirst and giving your kingdom away, which one would you prefer?" The king replied, "I would naturally prefer a tumbler of water and part with my entire kingdom". The Sheikh said, "Then, I do not understand why anyone should take joy in a kingdom which is worth only a tumbler of water". These two incidents show that each one of us has been granted, by Allah *Ta'ala*, such precious gifts, the value whereof cannot be determined in terms of millions and billions.

The bounties referred to above have been bestowed upon almost everybody but, if we consider carefully, we shall see that each one of us has been granted, by Allah *Ta'ala*, certain special favours as an exclusive privilege. Of these, there are three things in which everybody claims to excel others. First, there is the faculty of reason; even the dullest fool considers himself to be the wisest of all men and boasts of his own superior understanding. This claim to distinction, true or false, proves that the man believes himself to be specially favoured by Allah *Ta'ala*. Is it not incumbent upon him to be thankful to Allah *Ta'ala* more than anybody else?

Secondly, everybody considers himself to be superior to others in good habits. Each one of us can pin-point, in everybody else, some habit which he considers to be undesirable. In other words, everybody believes himself to be perfect in manners and thinks that everybody else is suffering from some flaw. For, no one is willing to give up his habits, nor does anybody think any of his own habits to be questionable. Some people do occasionally acknowledge their bad habits, but it is mere affectation, not from their heart. Is it not then incumbent upon the man, who praises his own habits to be grateful to Allah *Ta'ala* for granting him this favour, even though he finds someone else superior to himself in some other respect?

Thirdly, everybody knows better than others about his personal affairs and about his own inner state, and no one else can claim to excel his knowledge in this respect. Besides, there are certain facts about everyone's personal and inner life, which he wants to conceal from others, at all costs. So, it is a great favour of Allah *Ta'ala* that He has put a veil over all that is unseemly in us. Thus, Allah *Ta'ala* has, so to say, fulfilled the desire of everybody to keep his weak points concealed from others. And for this great favour also, everybody should be grateful to Allah *Ta'ala*. Likewise, there are thousands of gifts and privileges bestowed by Allah *Ta'ala* upon everybody, which he values above everything else and which he is not willing to exchange for other bounties of the same or of a different kind. Take, for example, the privilege of being a human being: nobody would like to be changed into a monkey. Similarly, few men would like to lose their masculinity and become a females; no Mo'min can think of losing his Imaan (faith) and become a non-believer; no Hafiz (one who knows the Qur'an by heart) would like to change his lot with that of a non-Hafiz; no scholar of divinity (Alim) would prefer any other status for himself; nobody who is handsome

would like to be deprived of his good features; no parent would like to be made childless, and so on. In short, each one of us is enjoying certain special privileges in matters relating to manners, appearance, character, family connections, prestige, social status, etc., which he is most unwilling to exchange for any other thing. Is it, then, not correct to say that each one of us has been granted, by Allah Ta'ala, thousands of special favours which have been denied to others? And, is it not unbecoming of a person to be ungrateful to Allah Ta'ala and to look enviously at another one who is possessed of some other bounty? So if you find someone possessing abundant wealth, you should think of the numerous bounties (mentioned above). You will find that, on the whole, you are more highly favoured than the object of your envy (or jealousy) . (*Ihya*)

As regards the wealth in his possession, nobody knows what is going to become of it; whether it will be a source of ease and comfort for him or cause trouble for him. For, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, 'Do not feel envious of a wicked person for his possessing a bounty; for you do not know what misery he is going to encounter after his death. Allah Ta'ala has decreed for a wicked man a damnation i.e. Jahannam that knows no ending'. (*Mishkaat*). We shall discuss this subject, in detail, under the Hadith that follows immediately.

①٤ عَنْ عُقْبَةَ بْنِ عَامِرٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يُعْطِي الْمُبْدِمِينَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى مَعَاصِيهِ مَا يَحِبُّ فَإِنَّهَا هُوَ اسْتِدْرَاجٌ ثُمَّ تَلَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ ○ (رواه أحمد كذا في المشكاة)

#### HADITH: 17

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam says: When you see Allah Ta'ala granting abundance to a disobedient person despite his sinful deeds, it may be just 'Istidraaj' (a way of bringing him to his damnation gradually). Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then recited the Ayat which means, "Then when they forgot that whereof they had been admonished, We



opened unto them the gates of (abundance in) all things till, even as they were enjoying that which they were given, We seized them unawares and lo! they were stunned'.

**Note:** The Ayat cited in the Hadith occurs in Surah (al-An'am: 44). The preceding two Ayaat briefly described how Allah Ta'ala treated the past generations of mankind. A brief translation of these Ayaat is given below:

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَحَتَّىٰ إِذَا فُجِّعُوا بِمَا أَلُوتُوا أَخْلَدُوا  
بَعَثْنَا لَوْلَاهُمْ لِبَلْسَمٍ ۝.....

*"And Rasuls of Allah visited the peoples in the generation before you, (but they denied them) and We inflicted upon them tribulations and diseases (and other afflictions) in order that they might grow humble (but they persisted in evil behaviour). It only, when any adversity fell on them, they had repented, wept and cried unto Us (We would have forgiven them their sins); but their hearts remained hard as ever and the Shaitan made all that they used to do, seem fair unto them! Then, when they forgot that whereof they had been warned, We opened unto them the gates (of affluence) in all things. So they felt proud of their excessive wealth rejoicing in their luxuries. Then, We seized them with an unexpected punishment and lo! they were stunned! So (with this sudden punishment) the last remnant of the people who did wrong was cut down. And praise be to Allah, the Lord and Sustainer of the worlds (for having finished the last remnant of the wrong-doers)". (al-Anam: 42, 43, 44, 45)*

In this Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has admonished us not to envy the evil-doers, if we find them in affluent circumstances in spite of their disobedience and indulgence in sins. For, in this manner, the transgressors are driven, gradually, to ultimate damnation. This state is a kind of latitude or 'Istidraj', as mentioned in these Ayaat. There are many other Ayaat in the Holy Qur'an on 'Istidraj' which forewarn men against such circumstances. Indeed it is a very dangerous situation, for the sinner is suddenly seized with the punishment, amidst his rejoicing, and he is too bewildered by being suddenly overtaken by his misery to find any means of escape. One should, therefore, be on one's guard against such dangerous situations.

Ubaadah *Radhiallahoh anho* reports *Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* as saying, "When Allah *Ta'ala* wills that a community should prosper and grow, He grants its members the qualities of moderation and chastity; when He wills to destroy a community, a door to dishonesty is opened for them and, when they begin to rejoice in their dishonest deeds, He seizes them unawares, with punishment". He then recited the Ayat (44) quoted above. Hasan *Radhiallahoh anho* says: "He who finds himself in affluence but does not deem it to be foreboding his doom, is not a wise man; and he who finds himself in straitened circumstances but does not consider it opportune for turning to Allah *Ta'ala* in repentance, is not a wise man, either". (*Durre Manthur*)

A Hadith reports *Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* supplicating Allah *Ta'ala*, thus: "O Allah! Grant less wealth and fewer children to him who believes in me and in the truth of the Commandments revealed to me, and grant him, a strong desire to meet You. As for him who does not believe in me and in the truth of the commandments revealed to me, grant him O Allah!, Abundant money and numerous children; and decree for him a longer life". In any case, if a person is being granted excessive bounties in spite of his persistence in disobedience to Allah *Ta'ala*, he is in a very dangerous situation. Such a one should repent, beg forgiveness of Allah *Ta'ala* and turn to Him. For the same reason, *Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* has warned his followers not to feel envious of a wicked person for his enjoying any bounty of Allah *Ta'ala*; they should know that miserable is his fate after his death. (The text of the Hadith has been given above, under Hadith XVI.

⑸ عَنْ شَدِّادِ بْنِ أَوْسٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْكَافِرُ مَنْ دَانَ نَفْسَهُ وَعَمِلَ لِمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ وَالْعَاجِزُ مَنْ أَتْبَعَ نَفْسَهُ هَوَاهَا وَتَمَنَّى عَلَى اللَّهِ. (رواه الترمذى وابن ماجه حكا في المشكوة وزاد السيوطى في الجامع الصغير احمد والحاكم وورقوله بالصحة)

#### HADITH: 18

*Rasulullah Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* said: The wise man is he who has moulded himself to perform such deeds as are pleasing to Allah *Ta'ala* and performs deeds which are of value after death, and an incompetent and silly person is he who follows his baser desires and puts false hopes in Allah *Ta'ala*.

**Note:** The Hadith means that it is a folly to follow one's sensual desires without bothering about what is lawful (Halaal) or unlawful (Haraam) and yet entertaining high hopes that Allah Ta'ala, Who is the Lord of Infinite Mercy, will forgive one's sins, thus beguiling oneself with vain hopes. It occurs in another Hadith that, "A wise man is he who earns virtues for the life after death and a naked (helpless) person is he who has no faith. O Allah! The true life is only the life of Akhirah." (*Jami-us-Saghir*). That is to say, the life of Akhirah is eternal and he who passes into the next world without any virtues to his credit, is like one who has wasted his lifetime. We should learn to distinguish between two different attitudes with regard to the Mercy and Forgiveness of Allah Ta'ala: (1) the attitude of a person holding true expectations of Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness, who craves for His Mercy and begs it of Him and (2) the attitude of an impudent sinner who persists in sins and beguiles himself with vain hopes of forgiveness.

Imaam Razi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "The following two Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an should suffice to deprecate Gharoor' (the beguilement: the attitude of those who are deceived by vain hopes of Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness, despite their persistence in sins)-

فَلَا تَغُرَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الْغُرُورُ ۝

1. *Let not the life of the world beguile you (lest you should indulge in worldly pursuits and neglect the other worldly gains), nor let the deceiver (Shaitan) beguile you with regard to Allah. (Luqman: 33);*

وَلَكِنَّكُمْ فُتِنْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْأَمَانُ ۝

2. *You tempted yourself into error, and hesitated, and doubted, and vain desires beguiled you". (al-Hadid: 14)*

Commenting on the first Ayat, Sa'eed bin Jubair *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Shaitan beguiles a person, with regard to Allah, through seducing him to persist in sins and giving him false hopes of forgiveness".

The second Ayat occurs in Surah *al-Hadid: 14*. The preceding Ayat describes a spectacle of the Day of Resurrection when the Mo'mineen (believers) will come to the Bridge (Siraat) laid over Jahannam, with a kind of Nur (light) shining forth before them (to help them on the way across the Bridge). And, in the following Ayat, Allah Ta'ala says:



يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْظِرْنَا لِقَائِكُمْ مِنْ كُورِكُمْ قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا وَادْعَاكُمْ  
فَالْتَسَوْا نَادَا فَخُيِّرَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِسُورَةٍ بَابٌ بِلُطْنَةٍ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرَةٌ مِنْ قِيلِهِ الْعَذَابُ  
يُنَادُونَهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى وَلَكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنْتُمُ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرْتَضَوْنَ مَا نَبَتُمْ وَغَرَّكُمْ  
الْأَمَانُ حَتَّى جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ

On that Day when the hypocrites among men and women will say unto the believers: wait for us that we may borrow from your light. It will be said: Go back and seek for light (Noor)!. Then there will separate them a wall wherein is a gate, the inner side whereof contain mercy, while the outer side thereof is toward the doom. They (the hypocrites) will cry unto them (saying): Were we not with you? They (the believers) will say: Yes, verily; but you tempted yourselves (into error), awaited (evil turns of fortunes for the Muslims), and doubted (the truth of Islam), and vain desires beguiled you till the ordinance of Allah (about death) came to pass and the deceiver (Shaitan) deceived you concerning Allah. (al-Haqqeed: 13-14)

Abu Sufyan Radhiyallahu anho is reported to have said by way of commentary on this Ayat: فَتَنْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرْتَضَوْنَ

'You tempted yourselves (into error)' means, 'You (the hypocrites) were led astray owing to your persistence in sins and you were beguiled by false hopes, for you used to say: 'Allah will forgive us our sins. (Durr-e-Manthur)

The author of 'Mazahir' writes that Sheikh Ibne Abbad Shazli Rahmatullah alaihe has said in his explanatory discourse on 'Hikam' (a famous book on mysticism), "The Divines say that 'Rajaa' (hopefulness about Allah's Mercy) does not consist in entertaining false hopes of Allah's Mercy which beguile a person into neglect of virtues, and lend him the audacity to commit sins: Such hopes are, in reality, vain desires, employed by Shaitan as a means of deceiving people". Ma'roof Karkhi Rahmatullah alaihe says: "It is sinful to crave for Jannah without performing good deeds; it is a kind of self-deception to entertain hopes of intercession by a pious being, without having any affinity, or spiritual link with him; and holding hopes of Allah's Mercy without obeying His Commandments is mere folly and sheer ignorance".

Hasan Basri Rahamtullah alaihe says: "Some people neglect

virtuous deeds and entertain vain hopes of Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness, so much so that they leave the world without having performed any acts of virtue. You will hear one of them saying, 'I have strong faith in the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala who is the Most Forgiving; I would say to him, 'You are lying! For, if you had faith in Allah's Mercy, you would have performed good deeds'. He also said on another occasion: "O servants of Allah! Beware of entertaining vain desires and false hopes of Allah's Mercy. For, those who hold such hopes (without performing good deeds) are living in a fool's paradise. By Allah, no person was ever granted good reward by Allah Ta'ala, neither in this world nor in the next, merely for having vain hopes of His Mercy". (*Mazahir-e-Haq*)

Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "The key to good fortune lies in mental alertness and thoughtful behaviour. All manners of misfortunes are rooted in conceit (*Gharoor*) and heedlessness. No bounty of Allah Ta'ala can excel the blessing of Faith (*Imaan*) and a true cognition of Allah Ta'ala. And, the only means to achieve them lies in having one's heart illumined by spiritual insight. Similarly, no punishment of Allah Ta'ala is more tormenting than *Kufr* (infidelity) and disobedience. And the only thing that causes a man to stray into *Kufr* is the darkness of ignorance, which blinds his inward eye. And the hearts of those who are wise and enlightened are like niches, wherein there are bright lamps spreading light. The similitude of their hearts is given in the Holy Qur'an:

كُنُوزٌ فِيهَا صُفَىٰ

*Like a niche wherein there is a lamp. (an-Noor: 35)*

The hearts of those who have been beguiled into 'Gharoor' (vanity and vain hopes of Allah's Mercy) are lost in abysmal darkness, where there are layers upon layers of darkness and they can hardly see anything. Their similitude is also given in the Holy Qur'an:

أَوْ كَظُلُمٍ فِي بَعْضِ الْبَحْرِ يَنصُرُ

*'As darkness on a vast, abysmal sea. There covers him a wave, above which is a wave, above which is a cloud. Layer upon layer of darkness'. (an-Noor: 40).*

Now that we know 'Gharoor' to be the root-cause of damnation, it is worthwhile explaining it in detail, so that we may guard ourselves against this spiritual bane. There are many Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an and numerous Ahadith on deprecation of 'Gharoor'. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said: "The wise man is he who observes self control and performs acts of virtue for the life after death; and the foolish person is he who follows his vain desires and entertains false hopes in Allah Ta'ala". In fact, what has been said in the Ahadith on deprecation of ignorance also applies to 'Gharoor' (vanity); and the threats of punishment for the ignorant are also aimed at those imbued with 'Gharoor'. For 'Gharoor' is born of ignorance, it is rather part of ignorance; and though every kind of ignorance cannot be termed as 'Gharoor', every kind of 'Gharoor' is ignorance. And the worst form of 'Gharoor' or ignorance is exemplified in the (attitude of the) Kaafirs (infidels), the profligates and the lewd ones, who say, "The pleasures of this world are like cash currency (i.e. available at the moment) and those promised in Akhirah are like entries of credit made in a person's account, to be realised later". And, they say, "No sensible person would prefer credit to cash currency". Now this is a foolish idea rooted in sheer ignorance.

The rule (of preferring cash over credit) applies only in such cases where the cash and credit are equal both in quality and quantity. But if someone were willing to buy a thing on credit for hundred rupees, for which another person offered only one rupee as ready money, even a fool would sell it on credit, not caring a whit for the principle of preferring cash to credit. What is more, the immediate pleasures of this world can in no way compare with the eternal bliss of Akhirah. For, a man might, at the most, live for a hundred or a hundred and fifty years, which bears no comparison with the everlasting life of Akhirah.

To give another example, suppose a physician forbids a patient to eat a certain variety of fruit because it might prove fatal for him. Now, the patient cannot say to him, "The pleasant taste of this fruit is its immediate benefit while the benefits from avoiding it accrue later and one should not forego cash rewards for the promised ones". Some fools say that the pain and suffering of this world are certain, while the punishments and rewards of Akhirah are uncertain and so one should not bear real hardships in the hope of winning what is uncertain. This notion is also a fallacy, born of utter ignorance. For, we see that businessmen take pains, and bear real hardships hoping



to gain profit, which is uncertain. Similarly, a patient takes bitter medicines and undergoes surgical operations thus suffering instant pain, in the hope of regaining health which is uncertain. Another false notion is entertained by the people who say, "The life of Akhirah is unseen; no one has experienced its joys and sufferings and we know little about the reality of that life." This reasoning is also rooted in ignorance. For, a layman should put his trust in the views of the learned ones who have the experience of working in a field of specialization.

A patient trusts what the experienced and learned doctors tell him about the treatment and cure of his disease and does not refuse to take a medicine simply because he does not know its effects. Nor does he ask the doctor to explain to him how the medicine works; if anyone did ask such a silly question, he would be looked upon as a fool. Likewise, we should have faith in what the Ambiya, saints, sages and divines have said about the Akhirah, because people the world over have, through the ages, testified to the truth and trustworthiness of these sacred beings. And, it makes little difference if a few ignorant fools deny having any knowledge of the next world or feel sceptical about it; such suspicions about the Akhirah usually arise in the minds of the Kaafirs (Infidels). The Muslims, by virtue of their verbal assertion of faith, do not voice their suspicions about Akhirah. But when they transgress the Commandments of Allah *Ta'ala*, commit sins, follow their lusts or indulge in worldly pleasures, their evil actions betray that, inwardly, they are also sceptical about the life after death. In fact, their actions belie what they claim to believe by word of mouth. Had they believed, from their hearts, in the reality of Akhirah, they would never have preferred this world to the eternal Akhirah. Such people are conceited (imbued with 'Gharoor') as they say, "Allah *Ta'ala* is the Lord of Infinite Bounty; He is All Forgiving and most Merciful. We have faith in His Mercy and Forgiveness and He will definitely forgive our sins. And it is a commendable virtue and a praiseworthy quality to entertain hopes of Mercy. His Mercy is infinitely vast! And our wrongs, however grievous they may be, seem insignificant against the measureless oceans of His Mercy and Forgiveness. Allah *Ta'ala* says, as reported in a Qudsi Hadith: 'I treat My servant according to his expectations of Me; so, he should have good expectations of Me'. Now this is an authentic Hadith and Allah *Ta'ala* does treat His men according to thier expectations of Him. But it should also be borne in mind that, sometimes, Shaitan leads

people astray through misinterpretation of an authentic text. Had it not been so, he would have found it hard to deceive people. Rasul-ullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has referred to this treachery of Shaitan in the Hadith quoted above, "The wise man is he who subdues his self (for obeying the commandments of Allah Ta'ala) and performs virtuous acts for the life after death; and the foolish person is he who follows his vain desires and still entertains hopes in Allah Ta'ala." These are the false hopes to which Shaitan gives a semblance of good expectations of Allah's Mercy.

In the following Ayat of the Holy Qur'an, Allah Ta'ala has Himself explained what is meant by 'having good expectations of Allah's mercy:

لَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ۚ

*'Lo! Those who believe, and those who emigrate (to escape the persecution) and strive in the way of Allah (which included all manner of efforts made for the cause of Deen). These have hopes of Allah's Mercy'. (Al-Baqarah: 218)*

One of the recurring themes of the Holy Qur'an is that Jannah and its bounties will be awarded to those who perform good deeds. Let us consider a simple example, which will serve to explain the true significance of 'the expectations of Allah's Mercy'. Suppose a worker is employed to make utensils by a very generous employer who promises to pay him high wages and even more in excess. He is also popularly known as very liberal-minded, for he does not take notice of minor faults and also pays for the spoilt or sub-standard pieces made by his workers. But the worker, instead of making utensils, breaks the tools supplied to him and sits waiting for his wages and rewards and says that he has perfect faith in the magnanimity of his master. Is there a man who will regard such a fool to be a sensible person? One reason why people hold such absurd views is that they cannot see the difference between true expectations and vain hopes. Hasan Basri Rahmatullah alaihe was asked, "What do you think of the people who do not perform good deeds but say that they have expectations of Allah's Mercy?" The Sheikh replied, "They are deluded by vain hopes. For, he who expects to gain a thing must struggle to achieve it, and he who fears a thing (e.g. punishment by Allah Ta'ala) must struggle hard to escape it."

— One day Sheikh Muslim Ibne Yasaar *Rahmatullah alaihe* laid prostrate so long in Sajdah that his teeth began to bleed and two of them fell out because of the pressure. Someone said to him, "I am not capable of such devotions but I do have expectations of Allah's forgiveness". The Sheikh said, "You are far from entertaining hopes of forgiveness, very far indeed! For, he who expects to gain something must struggle to achieve it and he who fears a thing also tries to escape it." For instance, if a person expects to get a child but does not get married or, having married, does not have intercourse with his wife, everybody will call him a fool. Similarly, if a person entertains hopes of Allah's forgiveness but does not have faith, or having Faith (Imaan), does not practice virtues, nor gives up evil deeds, he will also be regarded as a fool. On the other hand, a sensible person will get married, have intercourse with his wife and, still, will not feel certain of getting a child. Yet he will never cease to hope that Allah *Ta'ala*, in His infinite bounty, will grant him a child. He will adopt all measures for protecting the mother's womb from diseases, etc., and observe all necessary cautions till the baby is born. Likewise, a sensible person is he who believes in Allah *Ta'ala*, practises virtues, shuns evil deeds, hopes that Allah *Ta'ala* (in His infinite Mercy) will find his good deeds acceptable and remains in fear that his deeds might not be found acceptable till he meets his end. Only such people are really wise. All others, who have vain hopes of Allah's Mercy without performing good deeds, are fools. And Allah *Ta'ala* says in the Holy Qur'an, about such foolish people:

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُوا رُءُوسِهِمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ

*Couldst thou but see when the guilty hang their heads before their Lord, (and say): Our Lord! We have now seen and heard, so send us back; we will do right, now we are sure. (as-Sajdah: 12)*

That is, they will say, "Now we have realised that, as no one can get a child without getting married and having intercourse with his wife, nor can anyone get a harvest without ploughing the field and sowing seeds; so it is also not possible for anyone to win heavenly rewards without performing acts of virtue." However, hopes of Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness are desirable for a person who is deeply sunk in sins but feels remorse and wants to repent, though Shaitan whispers into his ears; "How can you, who are so far gone and so deeply immersed in sins, repent of your misdeeds? And, even if you repent, how can your sins be forgiven?" Addressing such people, Allah *Ta'ala* says in the Holy Qur'an:



قُلْ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا عَلٰٓى اَنفُسِكُمْ لَا تَقْطَعُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ الذَّنْبَ جَمِيْعًا ۝  
 اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ۝ وَاٰتِبُوْا اِلٰى رَبِّكُمْ وَاَسْلِمُوْا لَهٗ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُوْنَ ۝  
 وَاَتَّبِعُوا اَحْسَنَ مَا اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ بَغَْٔةً وَّاَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُوْنَ ۝  
 اَنْ تَقُوْلَ نَفْسٌ يَحْسَرُنِيْ عَلٰٓى مَا فَرَّطْتُ فِيْ جَنْبِ اللّٰهِ وَاِنْ كُنْتُ لَمِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ۝ اَوْ تَقُوْلَ لَوْ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ  
 هَدٰىنِيْ لَكُنْتُ مِنَ السَّٰكِنِيْنَ ۝ اَوْ تَقُوْلَ حِيْنَ تَرٰى الْعَذَابَ لَوْ اَنَّ لِىْ كَرْۢوَةً فَاَكُوْنُ مِنَ السَّٰكِنِيْنَ ۝

(O Muhammad) Say: O My slaves who have wronged yourselves (indulged in 'Kufr', Shirk' and other sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allah, Who forgiveth all sins. Lo! He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. Turn unto Him repentant, and surrender unto Him, before there come unto you the doom, when you cannot be helped. And follow the better (guidance) of that which is revealed unto you from your Lord, before the doom cometh on you suddenly when you know not. (And you are being commanded to turn in repentance to Him) Lest any soul should say, (on the Day of Resurrection): Alas! My grief that I was unmindful (of what was due from me to Allah) and I was indeed among those who used to make fun of His Commandments. Or should say: if Allah had but guided me, I should have been among the righteous ones! Or should say when it seeth the Doom. Oh, that I had but a second chance (to live in the world) that I might be among the righteous! (az-Zumur: 53-58)

In these Ayaat, Allah Ta'ala has promised to forgive all the sins of His servants if they turn to Him in repentance. And in another Ayat, Allah Ta'ala says:

وَالَّذِيْ لَعَنَّا لِمَنْ تَابَ وَاٰمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدٰى ۝

'And lo! Verily I am Forgiving toward him who repenteth and believeth, and doeth good, and afterwards followeth the same path of righteousness.' (Taha: 82)

In this Ayat, forgiveness is promised only to those who repent, have faith, do good and follow the path of virtue. Hence, he who does so is sincere in his expectations of Allah's mercy. But he who persists in sins, but claims to have hopes of Allah's forgiveness, is a foolish person, beguiled by Shaitan into vain expectations.

In the early days of Islam, people exerted themselves in prayers, took pains to avoid sins, tried hard for a high standard of piety, abstained from doubtful things, worshipped Allah *Ta'ala* day and night and, still, wept bitterly for fear of Allah *Ta'ala*. Nowadays, everybody follows his lusts (indulges in sensual pleasures), hankers after worldly wealth, takes no thought of turning to Allah in repentance and, still, everybody feels happy and unafraid of Allah's punishments; everybody says that he has good hopes of Allah's mercy and a perfect faith in the forgiveness of Allah *Ta'ala*, Who will forgive all his sins. Do such people think that all the *Ambiya Alaihimussalam*, the *Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum* and the saints, who took great pains in their devotions, had no such hope of Allah's Mercy? Allah forbid that we entertain such absurd notions!

①٩ عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ أَتَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَاثِرَ عَشْرٍ فَقَامَ رَجُلٌ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ فَقَالَ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ مَنْ أَكْبَسُ النَّاسَ وَأَحْزَمُ النَّاسِ قَالَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ ذِكْرًا لِلْمَوْتِ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ اسْتِعْدَادًا لِلْمَوْتِ أُولَئِكَ الْأَكْيَاسُ ذَهَبُوا بِتَرْفِ الدُّنْيَا وَكَرَامَةِ الْآخِرَةِ. (رواه ابن أبي الدنيا والطبرانی في الصغیرین بإسناد حسن ورواه ابن ماجه مختصراً بإسناد جيد. كذا في الترغيب وذكره الزبيدي طرقاً عديدة)

## HADITH: 19

Ibne Umar *Radhiallaho anho* says: Once ten of us, including myself, visited *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, when a man from the *Ansaar* stood up and said, "O *Rasulullah*! Who is the wisest and the most prudent of men?" *Rasulullah* replied, "The wisest of men are those who remember death more than everybody else, and who are occupied in making preparations for the *Akhirah* more than everybody else. It is such people, indeed, who win distinction in this world and who will be raised to positions of honour in the *Akhirah*".

It occurs in many *Ahadith* that *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* used to exhort people, in various ways, to remember death most often. Some of these *Ahadith* have already been quoted under *Hadith 9*, on restraining hopes. We have also quoted a *Hadith* in the

same context, in which Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* is reported to have said, "Remember very often the cutter-off of pleasures i.e. Death." The insistence on the importance of remembering death makes it worthwhile treating the subject exclusively in the following pages. For, remembering death very often has many advantages: it helps a person to avoid high hopes; it motivates preparation for life after death; it causes a man to develop non-attachement to worldly pleasures (which is a necessary ideal), it dissuades one from hoarding money needlessly; it persuades one to perform acts of virtue for the Akhirah; it induces a person to repentance; it prevents from doing wrongs and denying people their due rights. In short, meditating on death has many spiritual benefits. So the Divines particularly advise most of their disciples to spare some time daily for meditation on death. A Hadith says that once a man, standing in the presence of Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, said, "O Rasulullah! Who is the wisest of all the believers." Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* replied, "He who keeps death much in his remembrance and who makes good preparations for it". (Ithaaf) (It has been narrated in another Hadith that once Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* recited the following Ayat from the Holy Qur'an:

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ

*And whomsoever it is Allah's will to guide, He expands his heart for Islam.* (al - An'am: 12)

and said, "When the 'Noor' (light) of Islam enters his breast, it expands." Someone asked, "Is there any sign (by which one might know that the 'Noor' has entered one's breast? Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* replied, "Yes, one develops dislike against this world, full of false hopes (this world), and begins to long for the eternal (Akhirah), and starts making preparation for death before it comes". (Mishkaat)

Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once said, "I asked permission of Allah Ta'ala to visit the grave of my mother and I was allowed; so visit graves, for it helps in keeping death in mind." (According to an alternative reading, 'it is a source of admonition') Another Hadith has it to the effect that: "Visit graves; for it helps to develop indifference to worldly interests and makes one mindful of Akhirah". Abu Zarr *Radhiallaho anho* says that once Rasulullah



*Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said to him, "Visit graves from time to time; for, it serves as a reminder of the Akhirah; wash the dead, for, it is a cure for a person who is devoid of virtues and helps him to take heed; attend funeral prayers, for, it might make you feel concerned for the Akhirah; and those who have this concern remain in the shadow of Allah's Mercy and seek a virtuous life". (*Targhib*)

Another Hadith reports *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* as saying: "Visit the sick and follow funerals, for these make one mindful of Akhirah". Once a divine was following a bier when he came upon some people who were expressing their sorrow for the deceased. He said, "I suggest that you should grieve on your own account; for it will be more beneficial. This man passed away and has become immune from three afflictions; he need not fear to face the Angel of Death again; he will not have to suffer the throes of death again; he is no longer in danger of facing a bad end." Once *Abu Dardaa Radhiallaho anho* was following a bier, when a wayfarer asked him, "Whose bier is this". The Sahabi said, "It is your bier; and if you resent, it is my." Saying so, 'it is my bier', he meant to say that this was no occasion for idle talk; one should rather think of one's own death on such occasions. *Hasan Basri Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "I am greatly amazed at the people who have been commanded to make preparations for the journey to Akhirah, the call to embark on which has been announced, and yet they are engaged in worldly activities that are but a pastime. It is said of him that when he saw a bier passing by, he looked so deeply grieved that one might think he had just returned from the graveyard after burying his own mother." (*Tanbeeh-ul-Ghafilin*)

*Aishah Radhiallaho anha* says, "A Jewess once visited me and, after I had obliged her with something, she said, 'May Allah protect you from punishment in the grave'. I asked *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, 'Is there punishment in the grave?' And he replied, 'Yes, the punishment in the grave is real'. After this, *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* used to seek Allah's protection from the punishment in the grave? at the end of every Salaat, as a lesson for his followers". According to another Hadith, *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* is reported to have said, "The dead are punished in the graves so severely that their cries are heard by the animals". Another Hadith has it to the following effect, "Were it not for my fear lest you should stop burying the dead, I would ask Allah Ta'ala to let you hear the punishment in the grave". It has been reported about

Uthman *Radhiallaho anho* that, when he would stand over a grave, he would weep so bitterly that his beard would get wet with tears. Someone asked him, "You do not weep so sorely when you remember Jannah and Jahannam as you do when you are reminded of the grave". He replied, "I have heard *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* saying, "The grave is the initial stage of the Akhirah; if one escapes punishment in it, all the next stages are much easier) but if one does not escape punishment in the grave, all the next stages are severer than it". And I have also heard him saying, "I have never seen a sight more horrifying than that of the grave." A Hadith reports *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* as saying, "In the grave, the abode into which a man will move after the Day of Resurrection is shown to him every morning and evening; if he is destined for Jannah, he is shown his abode in Jannah, to his great relief and joy, while if he is destined for Jahannam, he is shown his abode in Jahannam (and the fear and anticipation of the impending doom adds to his pain and misery)".

Aishah *Radhiallaho anha* says: "Once a Jewess came to my door and asked me for some food. She then said, 'May Allah grant you protection against the temptation of the Dajjal and save you from the punishment in the grave!' I asked her to wait. Meanwhile *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* came and I told him what the Jewess had said about the Dajjal and the punishment in the grave. *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "There has been no Nabi or Rasul among the Ambiya of the past who did not warn his people against Dajjal and his temptations, but I tell you something about Dajjal which no Nabi or Rasul has told his Ummah: he is one-eyed; the word 'Kaafir' (infidel) is written on his forehead, which every Mo'min will be able to read. As regards the ordeal in the grave: when a pious man dies, the angels come to his grave and make him sit up. He sits up fearless and without grief. He is first asked about Islam and then his opinion about the man (i.e. *Rasulullah*) who was sent to them and he replies that he is Muhammad *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*) who was sent by Allah *Ta'ala* as a Rasul to His men, with the clear guideline, and that he believed him to be a true Rasul and believed in the truth of his message. After this, a place in Jahannam is shown to him, where he sees that people are huddled together, attacking each other, and he is told to look at the horrors from which Allah *Ta'ala* has protected him. Then he is shown a place in Jannah; he looks at its beauty and adornments, and feasts his eyes on the scenes of eternal bliss. He is told that this will be his abode after the

Day of Resurrection, as he had belief in Akhirah, died in that belief and will be holding the same belief on the Day of Resurrection.

"But when an evil person dies, he is made to sit up in the grave and he sits up, disheartened and terrified. He is asked the same questions mentioned above. He replies that he does not know and says that he held the same opinions as were expressed by other people. Then a door is opened for him in the direction of Jannah and he looks at its beauty and adornments and the bounties therein. After this, he is told that this was the abode which had been prepared for him initially, but he has been deprived of it. Then Jahannam is shown to him and he looks at the inmates of Jahannam huddled together, as though they were fighting against one another. He is told that this is going to be his resting-place, for, he had doubts about the true religion, died in doubts and will be resurrected in the same condition on the Day of Resurrection." (Targheeb)

Abu Qatadah Radhiallaho anho says: "When a funeral passed by Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, he looked at it and said, 'He is relieved or others are relieved of him.'" He then said, "A Mo'min feels relieved by escaping the toils and sufferings of the world, through his death, and enjoys the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala. He is relieved. But when a persistent sinner dies, men, habitations, trees and animals find relief in his death." (Mishkaat)

For, owing to the evil influences of a wicked man's misdeeds: calamities befall the earth, rains are stopped, commotion arises in the villages, trees wither up and the animals find it hard to feed themselves. Therefore, when such a person dies, his death brings relief to all those who have been under the evil influence of his sins. Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho said, "Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam gripped me by the shoulder and said, 'Be in the world as if you were a stranger or a wayfarer.'" Ibne Umar Radhiallaho anho also says, "When the day dawns, do not expect to see the evening and when it is evening, do not expect to see the morning; when you are in health, provide something for the time of illness i.e. if you perform good deeds when in health, the rewards will accrue to you even in your illness, and make provisions while living to serve you at the time of death". (Mishkaat)



Abu Hurairah *Radhiallaho anho* says, "We went to a funeral in company with *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, and on reaching the graveyard, he sat by the side of a grave and said, "Everyday the grave announces, in clear words, 'O son of Adam, you have forgotten me. I am an abode of loneliness, I am the house of estrangement (where you wo'nt find any one familiar), I am the house of horrors, I am full of worms, I am extremely narrow but I am expansive for a person for whom Allah *Ta'ala* wills me to be so." He then said, "The grave may be a garden of Jannah, or a pit of Jahannam". Sahl *Radhiallaho anho* says that one of the Sahabah died and they began to praise him and spoke highly of his devotions. *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* kept silent and listened to what they spoke and, after they had finished, said, "Did he keep death in remembrance?" They replied that he seldom talked of it. He then asked, "Did he abstain from a thing he desired to have?" On receiving the reply that he did not, *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "He cannot, then, attain to the grades of excellence which you can attain".

Another Hadith says, "Mention was once made of a Sahabi in the presence of *Rasulullah*, and the Sahabah spoke highly of his devotions and his diligence in self-mortification. *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* asked, 'How often did he remember death?' The Sahabah replied that they had not heard him talking of death. *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, 'He cannot, then, attain to such a high spiritual rank (as you consider him to have attained)'. Baraa *Radhiallaho anho* narrates, "Once we went out with *Rasulullah* to attend the funeral and burial of a person. When we reached there, *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* sat by the side of a grave, wept so profusely that the ground became wet with his tears, and then said, "Brothers, prepare yourself for (your entry in) the grave." (*Targheeb*)

Shaqique bin Ibrahim *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: People seem to agree with me when they say that they believe in four things, but their actions belie what they claim to believe:-

- (i) they say that they are slaves (Bondsmen) of Allah *Ta'ala*, but their actions betray that they regard themselves to be freemen;
- (ii) they say that Allah *Ta'ala* has taken upon Himself the responsibility to give us our sustenance, but they never rest

content until they hoard enough of worldly provisions;

- (iii) they say that Akhirah is preferable to this world, but they are ever engaged in amassing wealth, and are least concerned about Akhirah.
- (iv) they say that death is inevitable, but they are absorbed in worldly activities as though they were to live here forever!

Abu Haamid Lafaaf *Rahmatullah Alaihe* says, "He who keeps death much in his remembrance, Allah *Ta'ala* bestows three favours on him: 1. he readily turns to Allah *Ta'ala* in repentance; 2. he is granted contentment; 3. he shows greater interest in devotion in all his modes of worship. And, he who is heedless and unmindful of death is punished by Allah *Ta'ala* in three different ways: 1. he persists in sins and hesitates to offer 'Taubah'. 2. he is not contented with his income; 3. he becomes sluggish in the performance of his devotions." (*Tanbih-ul-Ghafilin*)

Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah Alaihe* writes: All Praise be to Allah *Ta'ala* Who has twisted the necks of powerful tyrants in the tight strangle-hold of death and broken the back of mighty kings with the sudden blow of death; Who has dashed, through death, the hopes of those who possessed rich treasures of wealth! Ah! These people did not even like a mention of death. But when the appointed hour (of death) came for them, they were carried away and buried in the dark pit of the grave, leaving behind their profusely lighted high palaces, where they used to lie reclining on soft couches! No more could they enjoy the company of their beautiful slave-girls or have their slaves waiting upon them, but, were forced to live with the worms! They could no longer feast upon rich varieties of food and drink, but were made to roll in dust! Nor could they sit in company with their friends, but were made to suffer the horrors of lonesome death! Were they able to build any castle to protect themselves against death? Could they escape death by any other means? Glorified be Allah, the Supreme, Vanquisher and Subduer of all, Who has no partner in His Attributes! He Alone is Eternal, Who has no equal. We all know for certain that death is inevitable and that it must come to all; that everybody is destined to go into the dust and live with the worms in the grave; that everybody shall have to face Munkar and Nakeer (the two angels who examine the dead in their graves as to their faith); that everybody after spending a long time in

the grave must see the horrible spectacle of the Day of Resurrection and must go either to Jannah or to Jahannam, which will be his eternal abode thereafter. Therefore, it is only wise that each one of us should be constantly worried about his death, should keep it in constant remembrance, should talk of it often and occupy himself with preparations for it, even at the cost of worldly pursuits. We should also anticipate our death all the times, lest it should take us unaware. For, no one knows the time when his death may occur. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "The wise man is he who subdues his ownself and remains occupied with what will be of use to him in the life after death (to the end of the Hadith)". And no one can make preparations for a thing unless he remains concerned about it all the time, keeps it in his remembrance and talks of it most of the time. Naturally, if a person is engrossed in worldly pursuits, is beguiled by the glamour of this world, and is enamoured of lusts and passions, he must be unmindful of death. And, even when people talk to him to death, he will feel disconcerted and show resentment. Allah Ta'ala says of this:

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَتَذَكَّرُونَ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقٍ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلِّيِّهِ الْعَلِيِّ وَالشَّهَادَةِ وَفِي تِلْكَ لَعْنَةُ الْكَافِرِينَ  
تَسْكُونُونَ

*Say (unto them, O Muhammad), Lo! the death from which you shrink will surely meet you, and afterward you will be returned unto the Knower of the invisible and the visible, and then He will tell you what you used to do (and give you befitting recompense). (al-Jum'ah: 8)*

The Ulama say that men may be divided into four broad categories, with regard to their attitude towards death:

Firstly, there are people who are so deeply absorbed in worldly activities that they do not even like to listen to a mention of death, for, they know that the death will put an end to their sensual pleasures. Such people do not remember death; and, when they do talk of it, they condemn it because it will cause them to forsake this world and these feelings fill them with sorrow.

Secondly, there are people who want to turn to Allah Ta'ala in repentance, but are still in the initial stage. When they think of death they feel afraid of Allah Ta'ala, which fear, in turn, causes



them to repent more deeply. They are afraid of death, not because they do not want to leave this world, but because their repentance is not perfect. Such persons do not want to die because they want to reform themselves and are worried on that account. They cannot be blamed for this fear or dislike of death, and the following Hadith of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* does not apply to them: If anyone does not want to meet Allah *Ta'ala* then Allah *Ta'ala* does not want to meet him. For, in reality, they do not dislike their meeting Allah *Ta'ala*, but only feel shy, owing to their own sins and short-comings. Their case is like that of a person who wants to prepare beforehand for meeting his loved one, so that he may see his beloved in a condition which is most pleasing to him. However, it is necessary that they should be constantly concerned about preparations for death and should not occupy themselves with any other pursuit; otherwise they will also be counted as belonging to the first category of people, i.e. those absorbed in worldly pursuits.

Thirdly, there are the Divines who know their Lord intimately and are perfect in their repentance. Such people love death and pine for it, for, what hour can be more blissful for a lover than the hour of his meeting with the loved one? The hour of death, for such people, is the hour of meeting with Allah *Ta'ala*. A true lover is always mindful of the promised hour of meeting and he can never forget it. It is such people who crave for death to come soon; they always anticipate death and wait for it impatiently, for they want to leave this worldly abode of sins. A Tradition says that, when the hour of death drew near for Huzaifah Radhillaho anho, he said, "The coveted hour (of death) has come at last; and at a time when I needed it most! He who does things which make him feel ashamed is not successful. Thou knowest, O Allah! that I have always loved poverty better than riches, and sickness better than health, and death better than life! O Allah! Grant me death immediately, for I love to meet You."

Fourthly, there are people who are perfect in their attitude towards death; they are reconciled to the will of Allah *Ta'ala* and desire nothing except what Allah *Ta'ala* has chosen for them. Thus they wish neither to live nor to die of their own accord. This symbolizes the height of love for Allah *Ta'ala*, which consists in complete surrender (*Tasleem*) and acquiescence (*Ridha*)

At any rate, remembrance of death enables a man to earn rewards and blessings of Allah *Ta'ala*, even if he is engrossed in the

world, because it disconcerts his moods of lustful pleasure and causes him to withdraw a little from the material world. It was in view of this effect of remembering death that Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "Remember death which shatters lustful pleasures." Another Hadith narrates, "If the animals had as much knowledge of death as you have, you would not find a fat animal for your food". Aishah *Radhjallaho anha* once asked Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam*, "Can anyone attain to the rank of the Shuhdaa (Martyrs) without sacrificing his life for the cause of Allah *Ta'ala*?" Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* replied, "Yes, he who remembers death twenty times everyday." Another Hadith says that he who recites the following Duaa (supplication) twenty-five times everyday can attain to the rank of the Shuhdaa (Martyrs):

اَللّٰهُمَّ بَارِكْ لِيْ فِي الْمَوْتِ وَفِي مَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ

*"O Allah! bestow on me blessings when I meet my death, and bless me in what follow death".*

These blessings accrue because the remembrance of death causes a person to disregard worldly pursuits and incites him to prepare for the Akhirah. Forgetfulness of death, on the other hand, causes a person to indulge in passions and lustful pleasures of the world.

Ataa Khurasani *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: Once Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* came upon some people who were sitting together and laughing loudly, and said to them, "In your meetings, do include talk of the shatterer of lustful pleasure." On being asked what he meant by it, Rasulullah replied, 'Death'. According to another Hadith, Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once said, "Keep death much in your remembrance, for it removes sins and causes a person to renounce the world". (*Ihya*)-It occurs in another Hadith that once Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "If you knew what circumstances you would have to face after death, you would not relish your food, nor enjoy the taste of water". Rasulullah *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once admonished one of the Sahabah thus: "Keep death very much in your remembrance; it will cause you to turn away from things of the world". Still another Hadith has it thus: "Keep death very much in your remembrance; for, it strengthens the heart of man and makes it easier for him to face death". Once a Sahabi said to Rasulullah, "O Rasulullah, I have no love for

death. What should I do to cure myself." Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam asked him if he possessed any property and, on his replying that he did, told him, "Send it forth to the next world for, a man's heart is attached to his possessions. After he has sent forth his property (given it away as Sadaqah etc.), he himself desires to be with it. And if he has left his property behind, he himself desires to stay with it". (*Ithaaf*).

A Hadith says: "When two third of the night had passed, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam would say, 'O people, remember Allah! remember Allah! The quake of Doomsday will occur soon! The time for the blowing of the Trumpet (Soor) is drawing near! And everybody's hour of death, along with its pangs and throes, has come!" (*Mishkaat*). It was the custom of Umar Ibne Abdul Aziz Rahmatullah alaihe to invite a number of Ulama every night, who would discourse on death, the Day of Resurrection and the circumstances of Akhirah. And thereupon he wept so bitterly that one might think he was weeping over a dead body laid before him. Ibrahim Taimi Rahmatullah alaihe says, "Two things have caused me to turn away from sensual pleasures of the world; death and the fear of reckoning before Allah Ta'ala." Ka'b Radhiyallahu anho says, "He who realises what death signifies will find that, by comparison, all the sufferings of this world are easier to tolerate." Ash'ath Rahmatullah alaihe says: "Whenever we visited Hasan Basri Rahmatullah alaihe and sat with him, we heard him talking to his companions of death and of the circumstances of the Akhirah! Once a woman came to Aishah Radiyallahu anha and complained to her of her own hard-heartedness, whereupon Aishah advised her to keep death much in remembrance to soften her heart. The woman did so and came again after a few days, to express her thanks to Aishah Radiyallahu anha. (*Ihya*).

Imaam Ghazaali Rahmatullah alaihe says, "Death is a tremendous thing to fear, but most people are heedless of it. Many people do not even talk of death, owing to their absorption in worldly affairs. A few talk of death but their minds are occupied with other things and, therefore, it does them little good. It is important that, from time to time, one should concentrate upon death, to the exclusion of all other things and imagine that death is staring one in the face. One should think of one's friends and relatives and recall to one's mind how they were placed on the bier, carried to the grave and buried under mounds of earth. One should imagine their faces



and think of their high ambitions and the changes that dust might have wrought in their handsome faces, and how their bodies might have decayed, how their children were orphaned, their wives were widowed, how their relatives were left to weep over their loss. One should think how their fortunes were distributed and how their clothes were left behind (never to be worn by them again)! One should, then, say to one-self, 'I shall have to suffer the same fate one of these days. How these people, who are lying in their graves, used to laugh and talk in meetings. How they indulged in lusts, but are now lying in the dust! They did not like to talk of death but have fallen a prey to it! They were intoxicated by their youthful vigour, but are lying today in the graves, forsaken and uncared for! How deeply absorbed they were in the affairs of the world but now their hands and feet are scattered apart and worms are crawling on their tongues! Their bodies have become food for worms! How heartily they laughed, but now their teeth have decayed and fallen out! They made ambitious plans and arrangements for many years to come, though death loomed over their heads; little did they know, on the last day of their life, that they were destined to spend that very night in the grave! The same is the case with me. Though I am busy making arrangements for years to come, I do not know what is going to happen tomorrow'. (Ihya). An Urdu poet says:

آگاہ اپنی موت سے کوئی بشر نہیں  
سامان سو برس کا ہے کل کی خبر نہیں

*No human knows about his hour of death; though man may plan to live for a hundred years, he never knows what may happen tomorrow!*

The angels deputed by Allah Ta'ala, are issued instructions for the whole year on one particular night of the year; they are assigned duties for the year and informed that such and such things have been decreed for such and such person. The Ahadith vary as to whether these orders are issued on 'Lailat-ul-Qadr' (one of the last ten nights of Ramadhan) or on the middle night of Sha'ban (Shab-e-Bara'at) but are in agreement about the fact that, on one night, the lists of those destined to die during the year are handed over to the angels. Many a man is engrossed in sports and pastimes while, in the heavens above, orders have gone out for his arrest; it has been decreed that he will suffer death and no one can intercede with Allah

*Ta'ala*, or appeal to Him, to change His decree! Nor can the decreed hour of a man's death be delayed a minute! *Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho* commenting on Surah 'ad-Dukhan' says "On the night called 'Lailat-ul-Qadr', the decrees of Fate are transcribed from the 'Lauh-e-Mahfooz' (the Guarded Book of Fate) and a record is made of all that is decreed for the year. A decree is issued about the amount of the provisions to be sent down, the persons destined to die, the persons to be born and the amount of rains to be sent down during the year. So much so, that a list is prepared of the names of the persons who are going to perform Hajj in that years". A Hadith reports *Ibne Abbas Radhiallaho anho* as saying, "You will notice that a person is walking about, in the bazars, though his name has been recorded in the list of those who are destined to die in that year." *Abu Nadhrah Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "On this night, the angels are assigned their duties for the whole year. And, orders are issued about the means of welfare apportioned for the year, about the evils to be suffered, about the sustenance to be provided, about the persons destined to die, about the afflictions and about the cheapness or dearness of commodities." *'Ikramah Radhiallaho anho* says, "On the middle night of Sha'ban (Shab-e-Barat), all the events decreed for the year are assigned to the angels; the lists of the persons destined to die, and of those who will perform Hajj during the year are handed over to the angels; and no changes can be made in the lists." According to another Hadith, *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "(On this night), the angels are given the names of persons who are going to die during the year from one Sha'ban to the next, with the specific hours of death destined for each. And, many a man gets married in this world and a child is born to him while, in the heavens above, his name has been recorded in the list of the dead".

*Aishah Radhiallaho anha* says: "*Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* used to fast very frequently during Sha'ban, for, it is in this month that a list is prepared of those who are destined to die during the year. And many a man is engaged in getting married while, in the heavens above, his name has been recorded among the dead; or, again, a man is preparing for Hajj while his name has been enlisted among the dead." Another Hadith reports that once *Aishah Radhiallaho anha* asked *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* why he fasted more frequently in the month of Sha'ban, to which he replied, "In this month, a record is made of those who are destined to die during the year and I wish that, when my name is

recorded in the list of the dead, I should be observing a fast." A Hadith says that, every year, on the middle night of Sha'ban, Allah Ta'ala informs Izraeel *Alaihissalam*, the Angel of Death, about all those who are destined to die during the year.

It occurs in a Hadith that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once said, "Everyday, at sunrise, the sun proclaims; 'Do whatever good you can, today; for, this day will never return in your life.' And every morning, two angels proclaim from the heavens above, one of them saying, 'O seeker of virtues, rejoice and go ahead' The other saying 'O doer of evils, desist from evil-doing.' (Do not accumulate causes of your damnation) Two angels also proclaim, one of them saying, 'O Allah! Grant any person a return to what he spends for good'; the other saying, 'O Allah, cause ruin for the person who withholds money niggardly". Ataa Ibne Yasaar *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "When the middle night of Sha'ban comes the angel of death is given a list of all the persons who are destined to die during the year, with orders that their souls should be taken out of their bodies at such and such time of the year. And, on many occasions, it so happens that a man is busy in decorating his house, or making arrangements for his marriage, or constructing a house, while his name has already been recorded among the dead." (*Durre Manthur*)

Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe* writes, "Even if the poor human beings were destined to endure no afflictions, no miseries, no pains and no horrors in this life, the anticipation of death alone, with its associations of harrowing pangs and throes and agonies, should suffice to disconcert their sensual enjoyments, to deprive them of their ease and comforts, and to cure them of their heedlessness. Death is such a painful experience that one should always be concerned about it and engage oneself in preparations for meeting death. And one should be more cautious about it, particularly because nobody knows the time when it may come to pass." A sage has said, "Man is like a puppet moving on strings and the strings are in the hands of someone else, Who may pull them at any time (and cause him to fall to the ground....and meet sudden death)" Luqman, the wise, advised his son thus, "Death is an occurrence of which the exact time is not known to anyone. Be prepared, then, to meet death at any time, lest it should take you unawares and unprepared."

Indeed, it is not possible for a person to enjoy himself in the company of merry-makers when he knows that he is wanted by the



police (say, in a criminal case) and that, after arrest, they will flog him. Actually such a person loses his peace of mind and can not participate in joyful pursuits; the mere knowledge that the police has a warrant of arrest upsets all his pleasures and can cause him sleeplessness.

It is sheer heedlessness not to be mindful of Izraeel, the angel of death, who may visit a person at any time and cause him throes of death, far more painful than thousands of stripes put together. In fact, no man can have an idea of the severity of death-pangs until he himself goes through them, or witnesses people who are experiencing them. It is common knowledge that we can cut off a limb that is 'dead' without causing pain to the body; similarly, the 'dead' skin can be cut off without causing pain. But if a person is hurt or pricked in those parts of his body that are not 'dead' he feels severe pain. Thus, the pain suffered by a person, when a part of his body is cut, wounded or burnt, is actually felt by his soul controlling all parts of the body; for the soul permeates through the entire body. When a part of the body is hurt, the extent of pain is proportionate to the size and situation of the affected area of the body. But when a man is in the throes of death, it is his soul, rather than the body, which is directly experiencing pain. One can form an idea of the severity of death-pangs by considering the fact that death drags forth the soul from all parts of body through which it (the soul) permeates. Thus each and every limb of the body feels severe pain, as though it were being cut apart. When a part of the body is cut apart, the soul is there abiding in other parts of the body and the man is strong enough to cry and writhe in agony. But when the entire soul is being dragged forth from the body of a person, he is too weak to moan or cry and, thus, get relief through cries. If the body of the dying man is strong, a sound of hard and painful breathing is heard in the very last hour, but if the body is weak, even the breathing is inaudible. Then the soul begins to depart and the limbs grow cold, one after the other. First of all the feet become cold, for the soul is dragged forth from the body, feet-foremost and then leaves through the mouth at the end and the eyes lose their lustre.

It was in view of these death-pangs that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* used to make a specific supplication to Allah *Ta'ala*, "O Allah! Make my death easy for me and lighten for me the pangs of death". As followers of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, we also supplicate Allah *Ta'ala* to make death easy for us, but we take it

lightly, not realising how severe the pangs of death are! The Ambiya *Alaihimussalaam*, and all the saints were terribly afraid of death. Eisa *Alaihissallam* once said to his companions: "Supplicate Allah *Ta'ala* to protect me from the agony of death. For the fear of death has well-nigh brought me to the brink of death". It is said that a group of the pious and devout persons from the Bani Israel went to a graveyard. After consultation among themselves, they prayed to Allah *Ta'ala* to raise a person from among the dead, so that they might ask him about his experience of death. Their wish was granted, and a dead man arose from a grave. He seemed to be a pious man, because his forehead bore the mark of Sajdah (prostration). He said, "What do you want to know? I died fifty years ago, but I still feel the pain that I experienced at the time of death".

It occurs in a Hadith that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "O.Allah, O.Thou, Who draggeth forth the soul from muscles, the bones and the fingers, lighten for me the pangs of death". 'Hasan *Radhiallaho anho* says that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* once on the severity of death said, "The agony of death is as severe as three hundred blows of the sword struck on various parts of the body." Ali *Radhiallaho anho* when exhorting people to go for Jihaad, would say, "If you are not killed (in Jihaad as martyrs), you will surely suffer death in your beds. And, by Him, Who holds my soul in His Hands, the death in bed is far more severe, in pain, than a thousand blows of the sword struck on various parts of the body, at one time". Auzaa'ee *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "We have heard it from the Divines that the dead will continue to feel the after-effects of death-pangs until they rise from the graves on the Day of Resurrection".

Shaddad Ibne Aus *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "The agony of death is more severe than all the agonies of this world and the Hereafter. It is more painful than being sawed in two, being cut into pieces with shears or being boiled in a cauldron. If the dead were to rise from the graves and tell people about the pangs of death, no man would take pleasure in this life; nor could anyone enjoy sound sleep". They say that when Musaa *Alaihissalam* passed away from this world and met Allah *Ta'ala*, he was asked about his experience of death. Musaa *Alaihissalam* replied, "I felt as though I was being burnt alive like a sparrow caught in a flame of fire, without being granted the mercy of death". A version has it, "I felt as though I was like a goat being skinned alive". Aishah *Radhiallaho anha* says: "When the hour of

death drew near, there was a bowl of water lying beside Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*; he would put his hands into the water and wipe his face with them, again and again, saying, 'O, Allah! Grant me relief in the throes of death'. 'Umar *Radhiyallahu anho* asked Ka'b *Radhiyallahu anho* about the agony of death and he replied; "O Amir-ul-Mo'mineen! It is as though a branch of a tree, that is all overgrown with thorns, were thrust into a man's body so that it should entangle with every part and then the branch should be pulled out violently. Such is the anguish experienced by a dying man, in the throes of death!"

So much for the pangs and throes of death, which we have described briefly in the foregoing pages. Besides, a dying man must also go through the ordeal of facing the Angel of Death (*Izraeel Alaihissalam*) and the other angels under his command. So horrible is the appearance of *Izraeel Alaihissalam*, when he comes to take the souls of the sinners and the non-believers, that the strongest of men cannot bear the sight. It is said that once Ibrahim *Alaihissalam* asked *Izraeel* to show him the aspect that he wears while taking the souls of the wicked. The angel told him that he would not be able to bear the sight, but Ibrahim *Alaihissalam* said that he could stand it. The Angel then asked him to turn aside and he did so. After a short while the Angel said, 'Now, look here' and Ibrahim *Alaihissalam* turned round to him. What met his gaze was a most horrible giant-like figure dressed in black, dark-complexioned and long-haired, with each hair standing stiffly on end, giving off a most disgusting smell, with flames of fire leaping up from his mouth and nostrils! Ibrahim *Alaihissalam* could not bear to look at the sight and swooned. When he regained consciousness, *Izraeel Alaihissalam* had resumed his normal form. Ibrahim *Alaihissalam* then said, "Even if there were no other affliction for the wicked, the terrible ordeal of facing *Izraeel*, in such a horrible form, should suffice for their punishment." This is the form in which the Angel of Death appears when he visits the wicked people. But when he comes to take the souls of the pious and the devout servants of Allah *Ta'ala*, he appears in the most handsome form, wearing a very pleasant look. When Ibrahim *Alaihissalam* asked *Izraeel Alaihissalam* to appear before him in the form that he adopts while visiting the pious people, he saw, standing before him, a handsome young man elegantly dressed, with perfumes all round his body. Ibrahim *Alaihissalam* said, "Even if there were no other joy for the believer than the bliss of seeing the handsome face of *Izraeel Alaihissalam* at the hour of death, it should suffice for his pleasures."



A Hadith has it to the following effect: When Allah Ta'ala is pleased with a man, He says to the Angel of Death (*Izraeel Alai-hissalaam*) "Bring forth the 'Rooh' (spirit) of My servant, so and so; I want to give him ease and comfort. I have tried him and found him as I liked him to be". Then *Izraeel Alaihissalam* goes to him, accompanied by five hundred angels, and each one of them gives him the glad tidings of a bliss not mentioned by the others. They are carrying boughs of sweet basil and roots of saffron and they all stand in two rows on both sides. When the Devil (*Shaitan*) sees this sight, he holds his head and begins to wail and cry. When his servants and disciples come running to him and ask, "What has happened, our lord?" He replies, "You wretched ones! Can't you see what has come to pass? A soul has attained salvation. What have you been doing all the while?" They say, "Our lord, we tried our best to lead him astray, but he would not indulge in sins".

It is said that when the hour of death drew near for *Jaabir Ibne Zaid Rahmatullah alaihe* someone asked him, "Have you any desire?" He said, "I want to see Hasan Basri. When Hasan was called in and *Jaabir Rahmatullah alaihe* was told about it, he said, "My dear brother, I am leaving the world forever and I do not know whether I shall be sent to Jannah or to Jahannam". (*Ihya*)

*Tamim Daari Radhiallaho anho* says: Allah Ta'ala says to the Angel of Death, "Go to My friend, so and so, and bring forth his soul, I have tried him both in joy and in sorrow and found him as I liked him to be. Bring his soul to Me, so that he may be free from the pains of the world". The Angel of Death then visits the man, accompanied by five hundred Angels; each of them is carrying a shroud of Jannah and holding a vase of sweet basils in his hands. Every basil flower has twenty colours, each colour giving off a different variety of fragrance. They also bring with them the sweetest musk wrapped up in white silk. *Izraeel Alaihissalaam* sits at his head and all the other angels surround him on all sides, gently stroking his limbs, put the musk-scented handkerchief under his chin and open a door to Jannah before his eyes. Then various bounties of Jannah are made visible, to comfort his heart, just as the men of a family put numerous things before a crying baby to soothe its heart; now his houris appear before him and now the fruits and fine clothes of Jannah are shown to him. In short, various bounties of Jannah are presented before his eyes; and the houris (his future wives) begin to dance with joy. When the dying man looks at these

scenes, his soul begins to flutter in the body, anxious to free itself. Then the Angel of Death says to him,

قُمْ يَسْلُوكِ مَنَظُورُهُ وَظِلِّ مَنَظُورِهِ

*'Come out, blessed soul, to the thornless lote-trees, and banana-trees growing layer upon layer, and cool spreading shades, and water gushing forth.'* (The reference is to the scenes of Jannah described in) these Ayaat (Waqi'ah. (28 - 37)

The Angel of Death speaks kindly to him, like a mother speaking to her child. For, he knows that the soul is a favourite of Allah Ta'ala and that, if he treats it kindly, Allah Ta'ala will be pleased with him (the angel). So, the soul is taken out of the body with perfect ease, like pulling a hair out of the dough; and when the soul departs from the body, all the Angels greet it and give glad tidings of entry into Jannah. The Holy Qur'an described the scene of a Mo'min's meeting with death in the following Ayaat:

الَّذِينَ سَمِعُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ طَيِّبِينَ ۝

*Those whom the angels cause to die (in a state of purity), saying to them, 'Peace be unto you. Enter Jannah because of what you used to do. (an-Nahl; 32)*

If the man is a favourite servant of Allah Ta'ala, he is treated as:

قَرُوبًا وَرِزْقًا ۝ وَجَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ

*'If he is of those brought nigh (unto Allah), Then, rest and pure sustenance and a Garden of delight. (al-Waqi'ah: 88-89)*

The departing soul says to the body, "May Allah Ta'ala bless you with the best of rewards! For, you were always quick to obey Allah Ta'ala and to perform acts of devotion; always anxious to avoid disobedience. I congratulate you on this day, for, you have been saved from punishment and you have also saved me". The body also speaks the same words to the soul when it is about to depart. The places where he was accustomed to worship Allah Ta'ala, weep over separation from him the gates of Heaven through which his good deeds used to ascend, and the gates through which his provision used to descend, also weep for him. After this, the five hundred

angels gather around the deceased body and, when the people who are washing the body turn it from side to side, the angels turn it over even before them; when they begin to shroud him, the angels shroud him in the clothes of Jannah even before them; when they put perfume on his body, the angels put on it the perfume of Jannah, even before them. Then, the angels stand in two rows stretching from his house-door to the grave, and receive the bier, invoking Allah's blessings and forgiveness for the deceased. When Shaitan (the devil) sees this spectacle, he wails and cries so bitterly that his bones begin to ache and he says to his disciples, "Woe to you! How did this man escape you?" They reply that he was infallible. After this, the angel of death escorts the soul to the heavens above, where it is received by Jibrael Alaihissalam, in company with seventy thousand angels, each one of whom gives him glad tidings of a favour from Allah Ta'ala. Then the Angel of Death accompanies the soul to the 'Arch' (The throne) of Allah Ta'ala and, on reaching there, it lies prostrate (in Sajdah) before Allah Ta'ala, Who says,

يَا سَيِّدِي مَغْضُودٌ وَطَلِّمْ مَغْضُودٌ

*"Take the soul of my servant to the thornless lote-trees and clusters of banana-trees". (al-Waaqi'ah: 28-29).*

When the body (of the deceased) is laid to rest in the grave, the Salaat that he used to observe stands on his right side, the Fasts stand on his left, his Recitation from the Holy Qur'an and Zikr stand above his head, the steps that he used to take while going for congregational Salaat stand by his feet, and the patience that he observed (in afflictions or while resisting evil temptations) stands in a corner of the grave. So, when the Retribution enters the grave and stretches its neck to attack the deceased from the right side, the Salaat says to it, "Get away! By Allah! The poor fellow has been through much suffering in his life and he has just gone to sleep!" Then Retribution tries to approach him from the left side, but the Fasts push it away; and then it tries to go from the head, but the Recitation and 'Zikr' (Remembrance of Allah) prevent it from advancing, saying, "You cannot go this way". In short, from whichever side punishment may approach, it finds its way blocked by one of the good deeds surrounding the friend of Allah on all sides. So, the punishment, recedes defeated and dismayed. Now patience, which has been standing in a corner, says to these virtues, "I stood waiting; for I meant to assist you in repelling the punishment, if I found any



side weak or inadequately guarded. Allah be praised! You have escaped punishment, all by yourselves. Now, I shall help him on the Day when the balance is set up for weighing the deeds of men".

After this, two angels come to the deceased: their eyes shine like lightening; their voices are like rumbling thunder; their molar teeth, like the horns of a cow; flames of fire rise from their mouths as they breathe; they have long hair falling to their feet; the distance between their shoulders is such that it can only be traversed in many days; they are far from being lenient or kind to men. Though they do not treat the Mo'mineen harshly, their very appearance is repulsive and horrible. They are called 'Munkar' and 'Nakeer'. Each one of them is carrying a big hammer, so heavy that all the men and the Jinns of the world together cannot lift it. They command the man to sit up and he sits up instantly, while the shroud slips from his head and falls to his hips. Then they ask him, "Who is your Lord? What is your religion? What is the name of your Nabi?". He replies, "My Lord is Allah, of Great Majesty! He is One, with no partner in His Oneness, the sole Sovereign of all, Who has no rival. My religion is Islam and my Nabi is Muhammad *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, who is the last of all the Ambiya (the seal of Nabies)". The angels then say to him, "You have spoken the truth"! They push away the walls of the grave, which expands above him, on his right side and on his left, in the direction of his head and in the direction of his feet..... becoming spacious on all sides. Then the angels say to him, "Raise your head". He does so and sees before him a door through which Jannah is made visible to him. They say to him, "O friend of Allah, this is your resting place; for, you have been a devout servant of Allah *Ta'ala*." Rasulullah (*Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*) has said, "By Him, Who holds my soul in His hands, at this moment, the Mo'min experiences an ecstasy of joy that will never return". Then the angels ask him to look towards his feet. He does so and sees a door opening into Jahannam (and some of its horrors are made visible to him). They say to him, "O! Friend of Allah, you have been saved from entering (Jahannam) by this door". Again, he experiences such an ecstasy as will never return. Then seventy seven gates are opened in his grave for him into Jannah, so that its fragrance comes to him and its cool breezes are blown in upon him. And this will last till the Day of Resurrection.

Now we shall describe what happens to the non-believers and the profligate when they are on the point of death. Allah *Ta'ala* says

to the Angel of Death, "Go to My enemy (so and so) and bring forth his soul. I granted him plenty of everything and showered My bounties upon him from all sides, but he did not desist from disobeying Me. Let Me punish him this day. So, the Angel of Death comes to him in the most horrible form, with twelve eyes and carrying a sledge hammer made from the Fire of Jahannam, all covered with sharp-pointed thorns. He has five hundred Angels under his command. They bring with them a big copper-blade and each one of them is carrying big live coals and fiery whips made from the Fire of Jahannam--all blazing hot. As soon as the Angel of death reaches there, he strikes the man with the sledge-hammer, the thorns whereof pierce and penetrate to every vein and every joint of his body. And then he pulls out the hammer with full force. All the other Angels begin to strike him with the whips, on his face and on the hips. They go on whipping him till he swoons. After that they drag forth his soul from the toes and bring it to the heels, all the time whipping and beating him. They pause for a while and then pull it to the knees and from there, after another pause, bring it up to the stomach. (They draw it out little by little, in order to keep it in the agony of death for a longer time). And from the stomach, they drag it up to the breast. Then they put the copper-blade and the burning coals under his chin, the Angel of Death says to him, "Come out, cursed soul and proceed to Jahannam":

فِي سَمُومٍ وَحَرٍّ

*In scorching winds and scalding water and shadows of black smoke, neither cool nor refreshing (but extremely painful). (al-Waqi'ah: 42-44)*

And when the soul departs, it says to the body, "May Allah punish you with the worst retribution! For, you always hastened to transgress the Commandments of Allah Ta'ala and were always slow to perform acts of devotion; you have ruined yourself and also caused my ruin". The body also speaks the same words to the soul. And those parts of the earth, where he used to commit sins against Allah Ta'ala, curse him. The legions of Shaitan's disciples come running to him and say, "Glad tidings to you, our lord, for we have sent a soul to Jahannam" And when his dead body is laid in the grave, the earth closes in upon him so that his ribs are crushed together and run into one another. Then black dragons start biting and stinging him, some of them beginning with his nose and going down to the waist, others

beginning with the big toe and coming up to the waist, till they all meet in the middle of the body.

The two angels, called 'Munkar' and 'Nakeer' come to him and ask, "Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your Nabi?" But to each question that they ask, he replies, "I do not know." And each time he says so, they beat him with the hammer so violently that the grave is filled with sparks flying off from the hammer, all scattered about. Then, the angels command him to look up; he does so and sees a door opening into Jannah, through which some of its beauty and luxuriance is made visible to him. They say to him, "O enemy of Allah, this could have been your abode, had you been obedient to your Lord". *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, has declared, "By Him Who holds my soul in His Hands, the dead man feels such deep remorse, at this time, as will never be experienced by him again". Then a door is opened for him into Jahannam and the angels say to him, 'O enemy of Allah! 'This is your abode, for you have been disobedient to Allah Ta'ala. After this, seventy-seven gates are opened for him into Jahannam, through which the black smoke and scorching winds of Jahannam will continue to blow in upon him, till the Day of Resurrection.'

The spectacle of death and that of punishment in the grave should always be kept in mind for, it is the most horrible spectacle. There are many other Ahadith which describe the scene of death and the circumstances of the grave, but we have quoted only the above Hadith.

The great scholars of Ahadith have criticised the 'Isnad' (line of transmission) of this Hadith, but its subject-matter is corroborated by so many other Ahadith. (Ithaaf) Particularly, the Ahadith transmitted in *Mishkaat* on the authority of Baraa Ibne 'Aazib *Radhiyallahu anho* and on the authority of Abu Hurairah *Radhiyallahu anho* in the Chapter 'On the confirmation of the punishment in the grave' and in the 'Book of Funerals', are very similar to this Hadith, in content. An Urdu translation of all these Ahadith can be seen in the book entitled *Mazahir-e-Haqq* for the sake of brevity. Aishah *Radhiyallahu anha* says, "Woe upon the sinners among the inmates of the graves! For, black dragons are given power over them and they bite and sting them, one beginning with the head of the man and coming down to his waist, the other beginning with the feet and going up to the waist, till they meet in the middle of the body." It



is, indeed, the retribution in the grave that has been given the name of punishment of 'Barzakh' (intermediary world) in the following Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an:

وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِمْ مِرْزَاقٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُنْفَخُونَ

*And behind them is a 'Barzakh' (partition) till the Day when they are raised. (al-Mu'minun: 100)*

Therefore whenever Uthman Radhiallaho anho made mention of the grave, he wept so bitterly that his beard became wet with tears. And Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam, even though (himself) righteous and absolutely immaculate, constantly sought the protection of Allah from the punishment in the grave, so that people should follow his example and make a habit of frequently seeking protection of Allah from this retribution (in the grave). For the same reason, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Were it not that you would cease to bury your dead ones, on account of fear, I would ask Allah Ta'ala to let you hear the punishment in the grave." (This Hadith has been quoted above). As a matter of fact, the retribution is dictated by the demands of justice. For, man has been sent to this world for the sole purpose of obeying Allah Ta'ala and He has, after recounting His favours to man (in the form of physical powers or worldly fortunes), reminded him again and again, in the Holy Qur'an, that he has been sent to this world solely for obedience to Allah Ta'ala, viz.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

*I created the jinn and the humankind only that they might worship Me. (Az Zariyaat: 56)*

And, He has also warned man that the life has been granted to him only for a test and a trial to see how he behaves himself after receiving all these bounties, the hour of death being the time of announcement of the result of this trial. Says Allah Ta'ala in the Holy Qur'an:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ  
أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

*Blessed is He in Whose Hand is the Sovereignty and He is Able to do all things. Who has created life and death that He may try you,*

*which of you is best in conduct* (al-Mulk: 1 - 2).

Doubtless, the world is an abode of trial, the underlying reason for creating the jinn and the humankind is that Allah *Ta'ala* wants them to obey Him, and all the pleasurable things, amenities and necessities of life, have been granted to men so that they should use them to fulfill their dire needs and spend the rest for the cause of Allah *Ta'ala*, which goes to their own ultimate credit, being (as it were), deposited in the Treasury of Allah *Ta'ala*. Therefore, it is sheer heedlessness, culminating in utter loss and remorse, on our part to indulge in worldly activities to the extent of neglecting the Commandments of Allah *Ta'ala*, forgetting the purpose of our creation and taking no thought as to why these bounties have been granted. And one feels real sorrow and compunction when the time comes for him to part with all his wealth, hard-earned and saved up with stringency in spending on ones personal needs, leaving it for others and pass away, empty-handed, into the Next World. If we possess a little bit of sense, let us resort to a lonely place and contemplate, for a brief moment, what our fate would be if the Angel of Death came to us unaware at this very moment, and what would become of the wealth and property, earned and hoarded after long years of labour.

Wahb Bin Munabbah *Rahmatullah alaihe* has narrated the following story: 'A king once decided to tour his dominions and survey his kingdom. He ordered out his stately robes and was presented a suit, but it did not please his fancy. He called for another, and still another and, after rejecting so many, found one that was to his liking. He wore this most elegant suit, and ordered his horse. A fine horse was brought, but he did not like it and sent it back. Then two more horses were presented to him, one after the other, but he did not like them either. At last, the whole stable of riding-horses was brought before him and he selected the best steed. The king then mounted the horse. The accursed Shaitan infused pride and vanity into his mind and he rode off proudly, followed by his courtiers, attendants and armed-men, in a mighty cavalcade. But the king was too full of disdain to take notice of them. As he rode on, he came upon a decrepit old man, dressed in rags, who greeted him, but the king paid no attention. At this, the ragged man took hold of the horse's bridle. The king flew into a rage and said to him threateningly, Off with you! How dare you catch hold of my horse's reins?' The man said, 'I have some business with you'. The king said, 'Be

patient and wait till I come back and dismount; for, then I shall have time to listen to what you have to say'. The man said, 'I must say it just now' and saying this, he gave a violent tug to the bridle and snatched it away. The king said, "Well, what do you want to say?" The man said, 'It is a secret; I must whisper it in your ears'. The king bowed his head and the man whispered into his ears, 'I am Izraeel, (the Angel of Death), come to take your soul'. And then, of course, the king turned pale and his voice quavered, and he said in a faltering voice, 'Could you give me a brief respite, to go home, meet my people and arrange my affairs'. The angel said, 'No, you shall have no respite. Never again shall you meet your kinsmen or see your possessions'. Saying this, the angel pulled out the soul from his body and he fell down from the horse like a log of drywood.

"After this, the Angel of Death went to a pious Mo'min (Believer) who was also going on a journey. He greeted the man saying, '*Assalaam-o-Alaikum*' (peace be upon you!) and the man returned, '*Wa'Alaikum-us-Salaam*' (And upon you be peace!). The angel then said to him, 'I want to say something into your ear'. The Angel whispered into his ears, 'I am Izraeel, the Angel of Death'. The man said, 'Most welcome! Blessed is your visit! For, you have come after I have waited so long. Of all the persons who are far away from me, you are the one I was most anxious to see'. The angel said, "Go and hasten to do the task for which you have undertaken the journey". The man said, 'I would dearly love to meet my Allah, more than anything else in the world'. The angel said, "Choose for yourself any state in which you would like to meet death and I shall draw out your soul when you are in that state." The man said, "I leave it to your choice". The angel said, "I have been commanded to do as you please". The man said, "If so, let me take Wudhu (ablution) and stand in Salaat; when I lie prostrate (in Sajdah) before my Lord, you can pull out the spirit from my body". So, the pious man was engaged in Salaat, lying in Sajdah, when his soul was taken out of the body. (*Ihyaa*).

It was one of the numerous favours of Allah *Ta'ala* to the humble author of this book (who considers himself to be the most insignificant person) that his eldest daughter (who was the privileged wife of his illustrious cousin, Maulana Muhammad Yousuf (May Allah increase his virtues), also passed away to the Mercy of Allah *Ta'ala* when she was in Sajdah. She had been ill for a

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Maulana Muhammad Yousuf (*Rahmatullah alaihe*) also passed away to the Mercy of Allah *Ta'ala* on 29th Zul-q'adah; 1384. A.H. in Lahore.



long time and was too weak even to sit up in bed for Salaat. She, therefore, used to make gestures instead of performing Ruku' or Sajdah etc. On Monday night, the 29th of Shawwaal, 1366 A.H, she was performing Maghrib Salaat, and was in the state of Sajdah when her soul parted to meet her Lord and Creator. This humble author is incapable of expressing gratitude to Allah Ta'ala for His innumerable favours to him.

Abu Bakr Ibne Abdullah Muzani *Rahmatullah alaihe* narrates, "When the hour of death drew near for a wealthy person from among the Bani Israel, who had hoarded a lot of wealth, he said to his sons, "Bring forth all my belongings before me". So, all his possessions were hurriedly brought before him; there were numerous horses, camels, slaves and plenty of wealth. When he looked at these things, he began to weep and cry in bitter sorrow, for he knew that he was going to part with all this. Meanwhile Izraeel *alaihissalam* appeared before him and said, 'It's no use weeping at this moment. By Him who granted you all these bounties, I must take your soul away'. The man said, 'Could you grant me a short respite so that I might distribute all these things'. The angel said, "I am afraid, no respite can be granted now! You should have distributed your things before this hour." Saying this, he pulled out the soul from the man's body".

Another such story is related of a person who amassed great wealth and provided for himself all manners of comforts and constructed a grand palace, with two entrances, on each of which he appointed a guard of his slaves. He arranged a sumptuous feast to celebrate his moving into the new palace, to which he invited all his friends and kinsmen. When the company sat to dinner, he himself was seated comfortably on a grand throne and was saying to himself, "I have a good stock of everything to last for years and I won't need to buy anything". As he sat there, musing on his own sufficiency, a ragged old man, with the beggar's gourd hanging in a sling round his neck, appeared at the gate outside and began to knock at the door. So loud was the knocking that the sound disturbed the rich man sitting on the throne. The slaves rushed to the door, wondering who this discourteous old man could be. They asked him what he wanted and the old man said, "Send your master to me". They said, "Do you think our master would come out of his palace to receive a beggar like you?" The man said, "He will come, go and tell him". They went to their master and told him about it. The rich man said, "Why did

n't you teach him a lesson, for his impudence?" As he said so, there was a still louder knock at the door and the door men rushed to the gate. The old man said, "Tell your master that I am Izraeel, the angel of death". Hearing this, the servants were stupefied and, when the rich man was told about it, he was stunned and implored in utter humility, "Ask him to take the life of someone else as ransom for my own". But the angel, who had meanwhile entered the palace, said to him, "Do what you will, I cannot go back until I have taken the soul out of your body". The rich man gathered all his wealth and said, 'Curses upon you, you damned wealth! You kept me too busy to worship my Lord and left me no time to concentrate on the remembrance of Allah'. Allah Ta'ala in His Infinite Power, granted his wealth the power to speak and it said to him, "Why do you curse me? It was on account of my being in your possession that you were granted entry into the courts of great emperors during the hours when the poor ones were driven away from their doors. It was on my account that you associated with delicate damsels and derived sensual pleasures, living in luxury like royalty. Ah! you spent me on unlawful things and I was helpless in your hands. Had you spent me on noble needs, I would have benefited you." And, in the midst of this dialogue, the Angel of Death suddenly pulled out the soul from his body.

Wahb bin Munabbih *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Once, Izraeel *Alaihissalam* took away the soul of a mighty tyrant, the like of whom the world had never seen. As he was carrying the soul, he passed by some angels who asked him, 'Have you ever felt pity for any person whose soul you were commanded to pull out?' The Angel of Death replied, 'Yes, once I was moved to great pity when commanded to take the soul of a woman who was all alone in a jungle and had just given birth to a baby son. When I was taking out her soul, I was filled with pity for her and her new-born child, for I did not know what would happen to the innocent baby left alone in that wilderness! The angels said, "Do you know who this tyrant is whose soul you are carrying now? It's the same child who was left alone." The remark greatly surprised the Angel of Death, who exclaimed, "Glorified be Thou, O Lord! Thou art beyond all imperfections! Most Kind and Most Merciful! And Thou doest as Thou wilt."

Hasan Basri *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "When a person dies and members of his household begin to weep and cry, the Angel of Death stands in the doorway and, addresses them, "I did not deprive him of

his livelihood (he has already exhausted his decreed portion), I did not cut short his life time. I have been commanded to visit this house again and again, until none of its inmates is left alive". Hasan *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "By Allah! If the mourners could see the Angel at that time and listen to his talk, they would forget about the deceased and start worrying about themselves".

Yazid Raqqaashi *Rahmatullah alaihe* has narrated the following story, "Once a cruel person of Banu Israel was sitting in privacy with his wife when he saw a stranger entering his house through the door and coming straight towards him. The man flew into a rage and rushed towards the stranger asking, 'Who are you and who gave you permission to enter my house?' The stranger replied, 'The Owner of the house commanded me to visit you and I am a person whom nothing can prevent from entering a house, nor do I need permission before entering the palaces of kings. I am not awed by tyrants, nor can anything prevent me from meeting those who are proud, vain or selfconceited'. On hearing this, the man was seized with sudden fear, a shudder ran through his body and he fell upon his face. At last he said in abject humility, 'That means you are the Angel of Death'. The stranger said, 'Yes, I am the Angel of Death'. The man said, 'Could you give me a brief respite, so that I might write out my will?' The Angel said, 'It is too late now; It is a pity that you have exhausted your lifetime and taken the exact number of breaths apportioned to you, under the Divine Decree. Your end has come and it cannot be delayed even for a moment'. The man asked, 'Where are you going to take me?' The Angel replied, 'You shall be in the company of your own deeds that you have sent forth to the Akhirah. And you will get an abode in the Akhirah, which you have built for yourself, with the help of your own deeds.' The man said, 'I never performed good deeds, to deserve a good abode in the Next World.' The angel said, 'Then, I shall take you to:

كَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَلَحُّ فَرْجًا لَّهْوَى

*The fire of Jahannam; eager to roast the skin; it will call forth the one who turned and fled (from truth in this world)! (al-Ma'aarij: 15-17)*

Saying this, the angel dragged forth the soul from his body and everybody in the house began to wail and cry aloud. Yazid Raqqashi *Rahmatullah alaihe* adds, "If people knew what happens to a person



when he is in the throes of death, they would weep more bitterly on his suffering than on their own loss" (*Ihya*).

Sufyan Thauri *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "When the Angel of Death touches the heart-vein of the dying man, he ceases to recognize people, cannot speak and forgets about everything of the world. At this moment, were it not for the shock of death-pangs, he would take a sword and attack those sitting around him in the frenzy of severe pain." Some Ahadith have it that, when the soul of a dying man comes up to his throat, Shaitan tries his best to lead him astray and rob him of his faith. A Hadith says that Izraeel *alaihissalaam* visits people during the hours of Salaat, notices them and keeps track of them; and, when the hour of death comes for anyone of those who have been particular about the timely performance of Salaat, he himself prompts him to recite the Kalimah and drives the Shaitan away from him. Mujahid *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "When a person is about to die, the faces of his friends and companions are made visible to him, if he used to associate with men of piety, he finds himself in company with the pious; and if he associated with the wicked and the profligate, he finds himself among such people". Yazid bin Shajarah *Radhiallaho anho* has also related a Hadith to the same effect. Rabi' bin Bazah *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who was a devout and pious man living in Basrah, has related that, "Once a person was about to die and people were reciting the Kalimah, *Laa Ilaha Illallah* ( لا إله إلا الله ) prompting him to recite it with them. But all he could say was, 'Have one (a glass of wine) for yourself and let me have one! Have one for yourself, let me have one.....' Similarly, there was another person in Ahwaz who, when at the point of death, was prompted to recite the Kalimah, '*Laa Ilaha Illallah*' ( لا إله إلا الله ), but he went on crying out, "Ten rupees a piece, eleven rupees a piece, twelve rupees a piece..." (*Ittehaaf*)

On the other hand, there have been many beings who kept death constantly in remembrance, prepared for it and performed great deeds of virtue for the life of Akhirah. They received death like a person receiving a gift, as a Hadith says: "Death is a gift to a Mo'min". When the hour of death drew near for Bilal *Radhiallaho anho*, his wife said, "Alas Alas! You are departing"! But Bilal *Radhiallaho anho* said, "What a bliss it is to die! For tomorrow we shall meet our loved ones, Muhammad *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* and his companions! When the time of death came near for Mu'az

*Radhiallaho anho*, he said, "O Allah! Thou knowest that I wished to live long, not because I loved this world or wanted to dig canals and plant gardens. In fact, I longed to fast and remain thirsty during the hot summer afternoons; I loved to face hardships and strive for the cause of Deen and to associate with those who remember Thee and make 'Zikr' in their company." Salman *Radhiallaho anho* began to weep and cry when he was at the point of death. Someone said to him, "What makes you cry? When you die, you will meet Rasulullah *Sallallah alaihe wasallam*, who expressed his appreciation for you when he breathed his last." Salman *Radhiallaho anho* replied, "I am not weeping for fear of death, nor because I am leaving the world. What makes me cry is that we made a covenant with Rasulullah *Sallallah alaihe wasallam* that we would use things of this world in the manner of a traveller who keeps the bare minimum to last him during the journey, but I am afraid I have not been able to live up to the instructions". Yet when he died, he was found to possess what amounted to ten Dirhams. Just imagine; This was all he possessed in the world, which he considered to be an excess. He then called for some musk, asked his wife to mix it with water and sprinkle it on his bed for, he said, "I am expecting a party of visitors who are neither men nor jinns". (*Ittehaf*)

When the last hour came for Sheikh Abdullah Ibne Mubarak *Rahmatullah alaihe*, he was smiling and said,

يَسْئَلُ مَنَّا فَيَعْمَلُ الْعَمَلُونَ

"For the like of this, then, let the workers work". (*as-Saffat: 61*)

(He might have glimpsed some of the bounties and joys of Jannah). It is also said that, when the Sheikh was at the point of death, he said to his servant named Nasar, "Lay my head on the ground". The servant began to cry. The Sheikh asked him, "What makes you cry?" and he replied, "It grieves me because you lived in comfort but you are dying like a beggar, with your head lying on the ground!" The Sheikh said, "Say no more! For, I supplicated Allah *Ta'ala* to grant me life as a rich man and cause me to die like the poor." Ataa bin Yasaar *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "A person was about to die when Shaitan came and said to him, 'You have escaped my snares'. The man said, 'I still do not feel secure from your evil designs'. Jariry *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that he was present when Sheikh Junaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* was in the throes of death and he

saw that the Sheikh was reciting Ayaat from the Holy Qur'an. Some one asked him, "Is it the time to recite from the Holy Qur'an?" (He meant that the Sheikh was very weak and was experiencing difficulty in recitation). The Sheikh replied, "What time can be more opportune for recitation? At this hour, my Book of Deeds is being completed. (I would like its last entry to be the Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an)."

Someone asked Junaid *Rahmatullah alaihe*, "How was it that Abu Sa'eed Khazzaaz *Rahmatullah alaihe* was in such joy at the point of death?" Junaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* replied, "He was so fond of meeting his Lord that one could expect his soul to fly to heavens even before the time of death to meet his Lord." When the last hour came for Zun-Nun Misri *Rahmatullah alaihe*, someone asked him if he had any wish. The Sheikh replied, "My only wish is that I should attain a true knowledge (*Ma'rifat*) of Allah Ta'ala". A man narrates: "I was sitting in company with Sheikh Mamshad Dinavari *Rahmatullah alaihe* when a Dervish came to him and said, 'Is there any neat, clean spot nearby where a poor man could meet his end?' The Sheikh pointed to a place where there was a spring of fresh water. The man went there, took Wudhu (ablution) and observed his Salaat. When he finished, he laid himself down full length on the ground and breathed his last."

Fatimah *Rahmatullah alaiha* relates that when her brother, Abu Ali Rudbari *Rahmatullah alaihe* was about to die, his head was in her lap. She says that he opened his eyes and said, "The gates of heaven have been opened and Jannah has been decorated. I can hear someone saying, 'Abu Ali, you did not aspire to attain high grades in Jannah, but We have granted you high grades.'" He then recited two couplets, meaning: By Thy right over me, never did I turn my eyes away from Thee, to look (lovingly) at anyone other than Thee; when I see Thy beauteous Countenance flushed with modesty, I become restless for Thee." When Sheikh Junaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* was at the point of death, someone recited to him the Kalimah, 'Laa Ilaha Illallah' (لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ). He said, "I have never been forgetful of this Kalimah, so I don't need to be reminded of it at this hour".

Ja'far bin Nasir *Rahmatullah alaihe* asked Bakran Dinwari *Rahmatullah alaihe*, the privileged disciple in attendance of Shibli *Rahmatullah alaihe*, "Could you describe to me the spectacle of Sheikh Shibli's meeting with death?" Bakran replied, "In the throes of



death, I heard him saying, 'Once I wrongfully took a Dirham (silver-piece) from a person, to atone for which I have given away thousands of Dirhams as Sadaqah on his behalf but, still, my heart is weighed down by the feeling of remorse and consciousness of wrong doing; He then said, "Please help me to take Wudhu (ablution)". I made him perform Wudhu but forgot to comb out his beard with the fingers (i.e. perform 'Khalal'). The Sheikh was too weak to do it himself and, being speechless with pain, he caught my hand and thrust it into his beard, as he did so, his soul departed!" When Ja'far *Rahmatullah alaihe* heard about it, he began to weep and said, "The Sheikh was ever so particular about the details of the Shariah (Islamic Law) that he insisted on observing a *Mustahab* (commendable act) in the throes of death."

Sheikh Kattani *Rahmatullah alaihe* was asked, when he was lying on death-bed, "What devotions have you been practising as a routine?" The Sheikh replied, "If it wasn't my last hour, I would not tell you about it. The fact is that, for the last forty years, I have been constantly guarding my heart against all that is other than Allah *Ta'ala*; whenever something other than Allah is about to enter my heart, I close its gates". Sheikh Mu'tamar *Rahmatullah alaihe* says; "I was with Hakam (a nobleman) when he was at the point of death and I was supplicating Allah to make easy for him the throes of death, for he possessed such and such qualities. I was recounting his virtues and invoking Allah's Mercy for him while he was in a coma. When he came to himself, he said, "Who was speaking such and such words?" When I said that it was I, he said, '*Izrael alaihissalaam* (the Angel of Death) was telling me that he always treats, gently and kindly, those who are generous'. And with these words on his lips, the Divine gave up his soul.'

When the hour of death drew near for Sheikh Mumshaad Dinawari *Rahmatullah alaihe*, another saint was sitting with him and supplicating Allah, "O Allah! Grant him entry into Jannah!" The Sheikh smiled and said, "For the last thirty years, Jannah has been presenting itself to me, with all its beauty and adornments. But never have I cared to look at it (because I crave a vision of Allah *Ta'ala* Who is the Owner of Jannah)" (*Ihya*).

When the hour of death drew near for Khalifah Umar bin Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe*, the physician attending him said, "Amir-ul-Mo'mineen has been poisoned and I am not very hopeful about

his survival. Umar bin Abdul Aziz said, "You should not be hopeful either about the life of a person who has not been poisoned". The physician asked, "Did you feel the effect of poison before I told you?". Umar bin Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "I came to know of it when the poison went into my stomach". The physician said, "Let someone treat and cure you or you will die". Umar *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "But my soul will go to my Lord and Sustainer. Who is the Best of all whom people should meet. By Allah! Even if I knew that something was lying beside me, which could restore me to health, I would not extend my hand to take it". He then prayed, "O Allah! choose Umar for a meeting with you," and he died a few days after this incident. Maimun bin Mehran *Rahmatullah alaihe* adds: "During these days, Umar bin Abdul Aziz *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to supplicate Allah *Ta'ala*, frequently, to grant him death. Someone said to him, 'Don't wish for death; for Allah *Ta'ala* has revived so many Sunnan (ways of Rasulullah) through your efforts and abolished so many innovations (Bid'aat) that had come into vogue.' Umar *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "Shall I not be like Yousuf *Alaihissalaam*, the virtuous slave of Allah *Ta'ala*, who supplicated Allah *Ta'ala*, thus:

رَبِّ تَوَقَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَاجْعَلْنِي بِالْغَيْبِ

'O Allah! Make me to die submissive (unto Thee), and join me to the righteous!' (Yousaf: 101).

Maslamah *Rahmatullah alaihe* said to Umar bin Abdul Aziz when he was at the point of death, "The money you gave us for your shroud was just enough to buy some cloth of very inferior quality; please allow us to spend a little bit more". Umar *Rahmatullah alaihe* desired that the shroud (of the same cloth) should be brought to him. He looked at it for some time and then sa'-d, "If my Lord and Sustainer is pleased with me, He will at once order a better shroud for me, if He is not pleased with me, I shall be stripped of the shroud I am wearing and made to wear a fiery shroud of Jahannam". He then asked to be propped up in bed and said while sitting, in an invocation, "O Allah! I could not fulfil Thy commandments and did not desist from doing things forbidden by You; still I declare that there is no god but Allah" (reciting the Kalimah). And with these words on his lips he passed away to the Mercy of Allah. He also said at this hour, "I can see an assembly of creatures who are neither human beings nor jinns". Another version adds, "At the last hour, he told people to leave him alone and, after everybody had left, they

saw through the chinks of the door that he was saying, 'Most welcome! Most blessed is the visit of those who are neither human beings nor jinns'. Then he was heard reciting this Verse from the Holy Qur'an:

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا

*As for that Abode of the Hereafter, We assign it unto those who seek not oppression on the earth, nor yet corruption. (al-Qasas: 83) (Ithaaf)*

A Divine says, "I prayed to Allah to reveal to me what happens in the grave. One night, I dreamt that the Day of Resurrection had come and the dead were rising from their graves. I saw that some of them were reclining on couches of rich silk brocade, some were sitting on silken sofas, some were seated on raised thrones and some were lying on flowers; some of them were laughing and others were weeping. I said (in the dream), 'O Allah! I wish all of them were in the same state! At this, some one said, 'This discrimination is due to our own deeds (A'maal); those reclining on brocade are men of good behaviour; those on silk cushions are 'Shuhadaa' (martyrs); those lying on the flowers are the men who used to fast frequently; those who are laughing are the men who repented of their sins; those who are weeping are the sinners and those raised to positions of honour are the people who loved one another for the sake of Allah Ta'ala.'" (Raudh)

Sheikh Abu Ya'qub Sanusi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: One of my disciples came to me and said, "I shall die tomorrow in the afternoon". The following day, the man came to the Holy Masjid at Makkah, observed his Zuhr Salaat, made 'Tawaaf' (circumambulation) of the Holy Ka'bah, then went a little farther away from the Ka'bah and gave up his soul. I washed his body and arranged his burial. When I laid him in the grave, he opened his eyes. I asked him in surprise, "Is there life after death?" He replied, "I am alive and he who is a true lover of Allah Ta'ala never dies." (Raudh). Sheikh Ibn-ul-Jalaa *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who is a well-known Sufi Sheikh, says that when his father died and his body was laid on a wooden board for washing, he (the Sheikh's father) began to laugh. The people who had come to wash his body were terrified (to see a dead man laughing) and ran away. After a while, one of his father's friends came and bathed him. (Raudh)



In his book entitled 'al-Isti'aab', Hafiz Ibnu Abdil Barr *Rahmatullah alaihe* has related some anecdotes about the pious beings who were heard talking after their death. He writes about Zaid bin Kharijah *Radhiallahoh anho*: 'The Divines are agreed about the fact that he talked after his death. He also relates that some other Sahabah talked after their death.

When the Sahabah were going out on the expedition to Mu'tah, people began to pray for their safe return after the enterprise. On this occasion, Abdullah bin Rawaha *Radhiallahoh anho* recited three couplets which meant:

Safe return? Oh, no!  
 I would rather my Lord granted me forgiveness;  
 And with this a mighty blow of the sword,  
 That cleaves my body asunder!  
 Or a pike pierced through my body,  
 That should cut through the liver and the entrails.  
 Thus would I love to die a martyr in the path of Allah.

On reaching the battle-field, the Sahabah *Radhiallahoh anhum* learned that the enemy was advancing with a formidable army of two hundred thousand soldiers, against their own small army numbering three thousand. So, the Sahabah held a 'Mashwarah' (consultation) and decided that Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* should be informed of the situation and, if he still commanded them to fight, they would start the battle. When Abdullah bin Rawaha *Radhiallahoh anho* learnt this, he came and said to his companions, "How strange! You are holding consultation to decide whether or not we should receive an honour that we were so anxious to attain. We came here merely to win the honour of Shahadat, we have never fought battles relying on our physical power, the force of weapons or the weight of numbers; we have always fought on the strength of our faith in Islam, our religion. Rise, my friends, and let us go forward to the field of battle; we are sure to win one of the two triumphs, victory or 'Shahadat and, for us, both are equally glorious". Exhorted by these words, all of them resolved to fight and the battle started. Before their departure from Madinah, Rasulullah *Sallallahoh alaihe wasallam* had appointed Zaid bin Harithah *Radhiallahoh anho* as their commander (Ameer) and said; "If Zaid is killed, Ja'far bin Abi Taalib will be your 'Ameer'. If Jafar is killed, Abdullah Bin Rawaha will be your Ameer and if he is

also killed, the Muslims should appoint one of themselves their 'Ameer', by mutual consultation". So, when Zaid *Radhiallaho anho* and Ja'far *Radhiallaho anho* had been killed, one after the other, people called out Abdullah's name, for, it was now his turn to command. At that time, he was on the outskirts of the army, with a piece of baked meat in his hands, for, he had not been able to taste any food for three days. Someone told him that Ja'far had been killed, at this Abdullah bin Rawaha *Radhiallaho anho* began to scold himself, saying, "You are still busy with the world (taking food)!" He then threw away the piece of meat, took the flag and fell upon the enemy lines. Someone struck him a blow with the sword that cut off one of his fingers. He chanted three couplets, meaning :

O, You are nothing but a little finger cut off!  
Is there anything else the matter?  
And what has happened? You have come in the path of Allah;  
Which is, indeed, a great honour and a blessing!  
"O Abdullah (addressing himself), if you do not die a martyr,  
You must die any how, for, there is no escape from death.  
Look! There looking you in the face is Shahada h,  
Your long-coveted honour!  
If you go forward and embrace martyrdom,  
Even as Zaid and Ja'far did,  
You will be among those who are truly guided;  
And if you shrink back, you will be among the wretched."

He then addressed his own heart and said, "O heart, what makes you hesitate? Is it the love of your wife? If so, I divorce her this very moment. Is it your slaves; I set them all free. Is it your garden? I give it away as Sadaqah. Don't you love to enter Jannah? By Allah! You will have to go forward, willingly or unwillingly! You have long been in peace and comforts of life. And now you hesitate! Just think of your own reality! Wasn't there a time when you were just a drop of fluid?" After exhorting himself in this manner, Abdullah *Radhiallaho anho* made a brave attack on the enemy and laid down his life as a martyr. (We have given a detailed account of this expedition in the 'Stories of the Sahabah', together with many other stories on the same subject).

When the hour of death came for Abu Sufyan bin Al-Harith *Radhiallaho anho* who was the son of a paternal uncle of Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, men of his household began to weep and

cry. He said, "Do not weep for one (meaning himself) who, since he embraced Islam, has never committed a sin with his tongue, nor done any wrong with his body." (For such a person, death is an experience of extreme felicity). Sunabihi *Rahmatullah alaihe* relates, "I was with Ubadah *Radhiallaho anho* when the time drew near for him to die and I was moved to tears. He looked at me and said, 'What makes you weep? By Allah! If I am called to testify for you on the Day of Resurrection, I shall give the best evidence in your favour; If I get permission, I shall intercede for you and try to do as much as I can for your benefit.' He then added: 'I have transmitted to you all that I heard from Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam*, which I considered beneficial for you, except for one Hadith, which I am going to relate to you now that I am leaving this world. I have heard Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* saying, 'If anyone testifies sincerely: "There is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is the Rasul of Allah", he will be declared immune from the Fire of Jahan-nam". When Abu Bakr *Radhiallaho anho* was at the point of death, his daughter began to weep and cry. He soothed her saying, "Do not cry, my dear child". She said, "Dear father, if I do not weep to see you dying, whose death can move me to tears?" Abu Bakr *Radhiallaho anho* said, "At this hour, I would dearly love to have my soul taken out, rather than that of any other living thing, even though it were as insignificant as a fly." He then said to Hamran, "Still I feel afraid, lest I should fail to keep hold of Islam, at the time of death".

When the time drew near for Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas *Radhiallaho anho* to die, he said to the people around him, "Bring me my woollen cloak". When it was brought, he saw that it was old and worn out. Sa'd *Radhiallaho anho* said, "When I die, shroud me in this cloak, for, I was wearing it when I fought in the battle of Badr". When the hour of death came for Abdullah bin Aamir bin Kuraiz *Radhiallaho anho* and he was in the throes of death, Abdullah Ibne Zubair *Radhiallaho anho* and Abdullah bin 'Abbas *Radhiallaho anho* were staying with him as guests. He said to his men, "My two brothers are fasting. Take care, lest you delay their evening meals owing to my death, and delay their breaking the fast." When Abdullah bin Zubair *Radhiallaho anho* heard this, he said, "Even the severity of death-pangs could not prevent you from entertaining your guests and showing magnanimity!" When he breathed his last, dinner was being served to his guests.



Amr bin Aus says, "I went to see Utbah bin Abi Sufyan *Radhi-allaho anho* when he was in the throes of death and I heard him saying, "Now that I am leaving this world, let me relate to you a Hadith that was narrated to me by my sister, Umme Habibah *Radhi-allaho anha*. She narrated that she had heard Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* saying, 'If anyone observes twelve Rak'aats of Nafil Salaat in the forenoon (Dhuhaa) sincerely, for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, Allah will build for him a palace in Jannah.'" It was owing to his devotion to Ahadith, and his zeal for the propagation of Islam, that he related a Hadith even on his death-bed. When Muhammad bin Munkadir *Rahmatullah alaihe* was in the throes of death, he began to weep. Someone asked him what made him weep and he replied, "I am not weeping because of committing some sin, though I do not remember committing a sin during my entire life; I am weeping, because I fear that I might have done something that I counted as a trifle, but which was a grievous wrong, in the sight of Allah!" He then recited this Ayat:

وَبَدَأَ لَهُمْ مِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ يُحْسِبُونَ

And there will appear unto them, from Allah, that which they could never have counted upon. (az-Zumr: 47)

and then said, "My only fear is, lest I may have to face such circumstances as I never anticipated." When Aamir bin Abd-e-Qais *Rahmatullah alaihe* was in the throes of death, he began to weep. Someone said to him, "You have lived a rigorous life and still, you are crying?" The Sheikh replied, "I am not weeping for fear of death nor for the love of the worldly things. I am weeping because, this day, I am going to be deprived of the joy of fasting in hot summer days and the bliss of Tahajjud (standing in Nafil Salaat), in the late hours of cold winter nights". When Hasan *Radhi-allaho anho* was lying on his death-bed, there were some people sitting by him. They asked him for some last words of advice. He said, "I advise you to observe three things. Listen carefully, and leave me alone when I have finished, for, I love to pass away to where I am destined to go, in solitude and perfect peace. He then gave them three pieces of advice:—

1. before advising others to do a thing, start practising it yourself;
2. before forbidding others to do a thing, avoid doing it yourself;
3. remember, every step that you take is either credited for you

or against you, for, every step brings you closer to Jannah or to Jahannam. So, before taking a step, think where it is going to carry you .

When Rabi' *Rahmatullah alaihe* was going to die, his daughter began to weep. He said, "My dear child, this is no occasion for weeping. You should rather say, 'What a joy! My father has been granted bountiful rewards on this day'". When Makhool Shami *Rahmatullah alaihe* was about to die, people saw that he was laughing. They asked, "Is this an occasion for laughing." He said, "Why shouldn't I laugh? For, I am going away forever, from those whom I wanted to shun and I am hastening to Him in Whom are centred all my expectations". When Hassaan bin Sinan *Rahmatullah alaihe* was in the throes of death, someone said to him, "You may be experiencing severe pain, at this moment?" The Sheikh replied, "Death has pangs, no doubt, but, at this moment, a Mo'min does not feel the severity of death-pangs, because of the joy that the anticipated meeting with Allah Ta'ala brings to him".

When the hour of death drew near for Ibne Idrees *Rahmatullah alaihe*, his daughter began to weep. He said, "Do not cry, my child; I have made four thousand complete readings of the Holy Qur'an in this house". Hasan Ibne Hayye *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "I was with my brother, Ali *Rahmatullah alaihe*, on the night when his soul departed from this world. Once, during the night, he called for water while I was observing Salaat; when I had finished, I brought him a cup of water but he told me that he had already taken water. I asked, in surprise, 'Who brought you the water? There is no one in the house, except you and me'. He replied, 'Jibrail *alaihissalam*, brought me some water, which I drank just before you came, and he was saying to me, 'You and your brother are with those unto whom Allah Ta'ala has shown favour.' (The reference is to the following Ayat from the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ  
وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا

Whoso obeyeth Allah and His Rasul, they are with those unto whom Allah hath shown favour, amongst the Ambiya (Messengers of Allah), the Siddiqeen, and the Shohadaa (martyrs) and the righteous. (an-Nisaa: 69)

Abdullah bin Musaa *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "When Ali bin Salih *Rahmatullah alaihe* died, I was away on a journey. When I came back, I visited his brother, Hasan bin Salih to condole with him. I could not contain myself with grief and began to cry. Hasan said, "Let me first tell you how he gave up his soul; for, that might soothe your grief. Just think, how blessed was his hour of death! When he was in the throes of death, he called for water. I brought him some water, but he said to me that he had already taken water. I asked him 'How?' and he replied, '*Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* visited me, with a host of angels following him in long rows, and he gave me some water to drink! Fearing, lest he might be talking in a delirium, I asked him, 'How were the rows of the angels?' He indicated by a gesture of his hands that they were one above the other". When Sheikh Abu Bakr bin Ayyaash *Rahmatullah alaihe* was about to die, and his sister began to weep, he said to her, "Do not cry, for, I have made twelve thousand complete readings of the Holy Qur'an in that (pointing to a) corner of the house'.

Amr bin Ubaid *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "When Sheikh Abu Shu'aib Salih bin Ziyad *Rahmatullah alaihe* was taken ill, I visited him and saw that he was in bed in the throes of death. He said to me, "Happy news! I just saw a stranger with odd looks," and when I asked him who he was, he replied that he was the Angel of Death. I asked him to treat me gently and he said that he had been commanded to treat me so". The son of Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "I was sitting by my father's side when he was in the throes of death. I had a piece of old cloth in my hands to bind his jaws together after death to keep them in place. He would faint and regain consciousness at short intervals and, when he swooned, we thought that he had expired. Each time he came to himself, he would say, 'No, no, not yet'. When he repeated the same words for the third time, I asked him what he meant. He replied, "Dear son, don't you know? The accursed Shaitan is standing beside me, gnawing his finger with rage and sorrow, and telling me that I have escaped from his treachery. I say to him not yet! I still fear his deceit."

When the hour of death drew near for Adam bin Abi Iyaas *Rahmatullah alaihe*, he was lying in bed, wrapped up in a sheet of cloth, reciting Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an. After completing a full reading of the Holy Qur'an, he said, "I beseech Thee, O Allah, in the name of my love for Thee, that I may be treated gently in the hour of death. O Allah! I cherish good wishes from Thee for this day". He then



recited: "Laa Ilaha Illallah," and his soul departed from the body. When Maslamah Ibne Abdul Malik *Rahmatullah alaihe* was about to die, people saw him weeping. When someone asked what made him weep, he said, "I am not weeping because I fear death; for, I have perfect faith in the Mercy of Allah. I am weeping because I participated in Jehaad thirty times, but I was not granted the privilege of Shahadah (Martyrdom) and now I am dying in bed, like women."

One day, Sheikh Iyaas bin Qatadah 'Abshami *Rahmatullah alaihe* looked into the mirror and saw a few grey hair on his head. He said, "When one's hair, turn grey, one should not occupy oneself with any pursuit except preparation for the Akhirah. The time has drawn near for me to leave this world." After this, he began to engage himself strenuously in prayers. One Friday afternoon, after he had observed Salaat and was coming out of the Masjid, he looked up into the sky and said, "Most welcome! I have been anxiously waiting for you for a long time!" He then said to his companions, "When I die, take my body to Malhoob (name of a place) and bury me there". After this, he gave up his soul and fell on the ground. When the hour of death came near for Ibrahim bin Hani *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who was a disciple of Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal *Rahmatullah alaihe*, he asked his son, Ishaque, "Has the sun gone down?" He replied, "No, father, the sun has not set yet. But you know that a person, when he is seriously ill, can even break the obligatory (Fardh) fast and you are observing only a Nafil fast. Why don't you break your fast?" Ibrahim *Rahmatullah alaihe* said, "Just wait". After a short while, he exclaimed (he might have seen something which was invisible to others), "For the like of this, then, let the doers do good deeds". (The reference is to the following Ayaat of the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ۖ لِيُثِلَ مَنَّا فَعَلِمَ الْعَمَلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

*Lo! This is the supreme triumph; For the like of this, then, let the workers work. (as-Safat: 60-61)*

After this, his soul departed to the Heavens above. Once, Abu Hakim Heiri *Rahmatullah alaihe* was sitting and writing something. Suddenly, he put his pen aside and said, "If this is what they call death, by Allah! It is so pleasant to die". Saying this, he breathed his last. When Abul-Wafaa bin 'Aqil *Rahmatullah alaihe* was about to die, men of his household began to weep. He said, "I have been

avoiding it for the last fifty years; it (death) cannot be postponed any further. Now leave me alone; I welcome it on its arrival".

One Monday morning, Imaam Ghazali *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who is famous for his book, *Ihya-ul-Uloom*, performed Wudhu (Ablution) and observed his Fajr Salaat. Then he called for his shroud, kissed it and put it to his eyes. After this he said, "With pleasure I appear before the King-of-kings. Saying this, he lay full length on his back, facing the Qiblah, and passed away to the Infinite Mercy of Allah. Ibn-ul-Jauzi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "When the hour of death drew near for my spiritual mentor, Abu Bakr bin Habib his disciple asked him for a few words of advice. He said, "I advise you to observe three things: (1) fear Allah; (2) meditate on the fear of Allah, in private; (3) fear what I am facing at this moment (death)." He then added, 'I have spent sixty one years of my life and, still, I feel as though I had seen nothing of this world'. After this, he asked a person who was sitting by his side, 'Look, do you see the sweat on my brow?' The man said, 'Yes', and the Sheikh said, 'I am so grateful to Allah, for, this sweat on the brow is the sign of a person dying with his faith (Imaan) intact (as stated in a Hadith)". When Abul Waqt Abdul Awwal *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who was a pupil of Imaam Bukhari *Rahmatullah alaihe*, was about to die, the last words that he spoke were:

قَالَ يَكُنْتُ قَوْمِي يَسْتَلُونَنِي بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ ۝

"Would that my people knew with what munificence my Lord hath pardoned me and put me among the honoured ones". (Yaa Seen: 26-27)

Muhammad bin Haamid *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "I was with Ahmad Ibne Khudrawiahe *Rahmatullah alaihe* when he was on his death bed. The ninety five year old Sheikh was in the throes of death, when somebody asked him a question. He replied, with tears in his eyes, 'For the last ninety-five years, I have been knocking at a door, which is now going to open; and I am anxious to know whether it will open on to good or bad fortune for me. I am too much preoccupied to answer any questions at this time'. When his creditors heard that the Sheikh was lying on his deathbed, they gathered round him because his debts amounted to seven hundred Dinars (gold pieces). The Sheikh said, in an invocation to Allah *Ta'ala*, "O Allah! Thou hast allowed the practice of pledges, as a security for the claims of the creditors. My life was, as it were, a pledge for my

creditors and, so long as I lived, they were sure that their claims would be satisfied. Now that Thou art calling back my soul, pay off my debts". He had hardly finished when someone knocked at the door and said, "Where are the creditors of Sheikh Ahmad?" The visitor then settled all their claims and the Sheikh's soul departed from the body."

A Sufi Sheikh was at the point of death when he said to his disciple, who was waiting on him, "Bind my hands together and let me lie down with my face touching the ground!" The disciple did so. When the Sheikh said, "The time has come for me to embark on a journey to the unknown; I am not free of the taint of sins, nor do I have any excuse to offer as an apology, nor is there any power to help me". He then exclaimed, repeating his words over and over again, "Suffice it for me that Thou art mine! Thou alone art mine!" Saying this, he uttered a loud cry and his soul departed from the body. A voice proclaimed from no where, "This man showed humility towards his Lord and He accepted it from him".

A certain man has narrated the story of a saint who was sobbing in the throes of death. His mouth was all covered with flies. The man took pity on him and began to drive away flies from his face. The saint opened his eyes and, staring hard at the man, said, "Throughout the long years of my life, I have sought in vain to have one hour of exclusive intimacy with my Lord. Now that I have got it, you have come to veil me from Him. Leave me alone: may Allah bless you".

Abu Bakr *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that he was with Sheikh Abu Bakr Zaqaq. In the morning when he was saying, "O Allah! How long art Thou going to detain me in this world?" And the Sheikh died the same day, before Zuhra Salaat. When Makhool Shami *Rahmatullah alaihe* was taken ill, a visitor said, "May Allah grant you health!" The Sheikh said, "Oh no! To be reunited with Allah, of Whom nothing can be expected but that which is good, is far better than living with the people whose evil may be feared, at all times".

Abu Ali Rudbari *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: A poor and ragged old man once came to me on Eid day and said, "Is there any neat clean place around where a poor man could meet his death?" I thought he was not talking sense and said, with unconcern, "Come in, and lie where you like, and give up your soul". The man came in,



performed 'Wudhu' (ablution) and observed a few Rakaat of Salaat. He then laid on the ground and his soul departed from the body. I washed his body, shrouded him and arranged his burial. When I was going to put him in the grave, I thought that I should uncover his face and lay him on his face, so that Allah Ta'ala might have mercy on him, because of his poverty and for his dying away from his home. As soon as I uncovered his face, he opened his eyes. I asked him in surprise, "My lord, is there life after death"? He replied, "Yes, I am alive and so is everybody who truly loves his Lord. Insha-Allah, I shall intercede for you on the Day of Resurrection, by virtue of the distinction granted to me by Allah Ta'ala".

Ali Ibne Sahl Asbahani *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to say to his friends, "Do you think I shall die like common people? Do you think I shall fall ill and people will visit me in bed before I die? Oh no! I shall hear someone calling me by name and I shall depart from the world." And that was what actually happened. One day the Sheikh was going somewhere when he suddenly exclaimed, "At Thy service, my Lord (Labbaik)," and his soul departed from the body. Abul Hasan Muzani *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "When the hour of death drew near for Sheikh Abu Ya'qub Nahrjuri *Rahmatullah alaihe*, and he was in the throes of death, I began to recite the Kalimah, 'Laa-Ilaha-Ilallah' to him to prompt him to recite it after me. The Sheikh looked at me, smiled and said, 'Do you think I need to be reminded of this Kalimah? By the Honour of Allah, Who is Eternal, I see Him manifest, but He is veiled from me only by reason of His sublime Majesty and Supreme Power'. And with these words on his lips, his soul departed to meet his Lord". After the Sheikh's death, Muzani *Rahmatullah alaihe* used to weep with remorse whenever he recalled this incident. He would say to himself, "Shame on you! A wretch like you reminding a Sheikh like Abu Ya'qub *Rahmatullah alaihe* to recite the Kalimah at the hour of death!"

Abul Husain Maliki *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that he associated with Sheikh Khair Nurbaf *Rahmatullah alaihe* for several years. The Sheikh said to him, eight days before his death, "I shall die on Thursday evening, at the time of Maghrib Salaat, and I shall be buried on Friday after Jum'ah Salaat". Although he advised me not to forget, but, I forgot about it and, on Friday morning, a man told me about the Sheikh's death. I immediately went to his place to attend his funeral prayers. On the way, I met people coming back from his house who told me that the burial would take place after

Jum'ah Salaat. Nevertheless, I went to his house and asked people the details of the Sheikh's experience of death. A person, who had remained with him till his last breath, narrated to me that the Sheikh swooned for a while just before Maghrib Salaat. Then he recovered somewhat and said to someone in the corner of the room, who was invisible to all others, "Stop for a while; you have been commanded to do a thing and I have been commanded to do a thing. That which you are commanded to do (viz. to take my life) will not escape you, but that which I am commanded to do (viz. to observe Maghrib Salaat) will escape me. Let me do as I am commanded." He then called for water, made a fresh Wudhu and performed Maghrib Salaat. After this, he laid himself on the bed, closed his eyes and gave up his life. They say that, on the same night, someone saw him in a dream and asked him, "How are you?" The Sheikh replied, "Do not ask me of this, but I have gained release from your rotten world." Abu Sa'eed Khazzaaz *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that he was once staying in Makkah Mu'azzamah. One day, on coming out of the Bab-e-Bani Shaibah (a gate), he saw a very handsome man lying dead on the ground. He was looking at his face in surprise, when the dead man opened his eyes, smiled at him and said, "Abu Sa'eed, don't you know that the friends of Allah (those who love Him truly) do not die; they are just transferred from this world to the next."

When Zun-Noon Misri *Rahmatullah alaihe* was about to die, someone asked him to give him a word of advice. The Sheikh said, "Do not disturb me at this hour; I am looking in amazement at the wonders of His Infinite Bounty". Abu Uthman Heiri says: "When Abu Hafs *Rahmatullah alaihe* was in the throes of death, someone asked him to give him one last word of advice. The Sheikh said (or indicated by a gesture) that he was powerless to speak. After a while, he looked relieved and I asked him for a word of counsel, adding that I would convey it to the people. The Sheikh said, "Bow in sincere humility to Allah Ta'ala, for having failed to do what you should have done (This is my last word of advice to you)." Junaid Baghdadi *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "I stood above Sheikh Sirri Saqati *Rahmatullah alaihe* when the last hour drew near for him and he was in the throes of death. With tears dripping from my eyes, I kissed his lips. When my tears dropped on his face, the Sheikh said, "Who are you?" I said in humility, "It is your servant, Junaid!" He said, "Most welcome! It was so good of you to visit me". I asked, "Give me a last word of advice," and the Sheikh replied, "Avoid associating with the evil-doers, and take care, lest your association with others should cause you to be estranged from Allah Ta'ala."

It is said that Sheikh Habib-Ajami *Rahmatullah alaihe*, who is one of the renowned spiritual leaders, looked gravely concerned at the time of death. Someone said to him, "It is strange that a Divine like you should feel so disturbed at the hour of death; we have never seen you in such great worry". The Sheikh replied, "The journey (to the Unknown) is far too long for my scanty provisions (the store of virtues). I do not know the way, for, I have not traversed it before. I shall have to face my Lord and Sustainer, the Master of my soul, Whose Countenance I have not seen before. I shall have to see such horrible spectacles as I have never seen before. I shall be laid in the grave under the ground and be there, till the Day of Resurrection, all alone, without any friend or comforter. I shall then be required to appear before Allah *Ta'ala* for Reckoning and, if I am told to present one act of virtue like the act of reciting 'Subhaan-Allah,' once performed during the sixty years of my life, which should be untarnished by the evil influence of Shaitan, I fear that I may not be able to produce one".

The Sheikh was saying so in modesty though, in truth, he had remained least concerned with the world, throughout the sixty years of his life. We should consider how we shall face the reckoning, for, in addition to our preoccupation with the world, we are never free of sins, and most of our actions only please Shaitan. Abdul Jabbaar *Rahmatullah alaihe* says: "I remained under the tutelage of my Sheikh, Fath bin Shakhraf *Rahmatullah alaihe* for thirty years and, during this period, I never saw him looking up to the sky. One day, he turned his eyes towards the sky and said, 'I have waited so long, to be reunited with Thee, and I have no patience left in me. O Allah! Call me back to Thyself!'. And within a week after this incident, the Sheikh passed away, to be reunited with Allah *Ta'ala*."

Abu Sa'eed Musali *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "Fath bin Sa'eed *Rahmatullah alaihe* observed his Eid Salaat, on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adhaa, and came back from the place of congregation, rather late in the forenoon. When he was coming back, he saw the smoke rising from the houses where people were cooking the sacrificial meat. He began to weep and said, 'People have sacrificed animals to gain nearness to Thee. Dear Lord! I wish I knew what to sacrifice for this purpose'. Saying this, he fainted and fell on the ground. I sprinkled water on his face and, after a while, he recovered and resumed his walk. When he reached the streets of the city, he looked up to the sky and said, 'Dear Lord, Thou knowest how long I have suffered



from grief and sorrow, being estranged from Thee. And, Thou knowest how long I have been wandering in the streets. My Allah! How long will you detain me in this world, away from Thee?' Saying this, he fainted again. I sprinkled water on his face and his condition improved. A few days later, the Sheikh breathed his last."

Muhammad bin Qasim *Rahmatullah alaihe* says, "My spiritual guide, Sheikh Muhammad bin Aslam Tusi *Rahmatullah alaihe* said to me, four days before his death, 'Come, there is good news for you. Allah *Ta'ala* has done a great favour to your friend (meaning himself). The hour of my death has drawn near and, as a special favour of Allah *Ta'ala*, I do not own a single Dirham to be accounted for on the Day of Resurrection. Now shut the door of my room and do not let anyone come near me till I die. And remember that I have no possessions to bother you about the distribution of my inheritance. My sole property consists of this sheet of cloth, a piece of rug, a container of water for 'Wudhu' (ablution) and my books, all of which you can see here. And there are thirty Dirhams in this bag, which do not belong to me, but are the property of my son, given to him by a relative of his. What can be more lawful for me than this money? For, it belongs to my son and Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* has said, 'You and your property belong to your father'. With these Dirhams, buy just as much cloth as should suffice to cover my body, not more than that. I mean, you can buy one undergarment for the shroud with this money, and you can set this piece of rug and this sheet as upper garments, thus making three garments of shroud according to the Sunnah. And give away this container, as Sadaqah, to some poor man who might use it for Wudhu'. Having thus made his will, the Sheikh died on the fourth day after this incident." Abdul Khaliq *Rahmatullah alaihe* says that he was with Yousuf bin Husain *Rahmatullah alaihe* when he was in the throes of death and he heard the Sheikh saying, "O Allah! I preached virtues to the people, in public, but myself was not without falsehood. As such, I was insincere to my ownself. O Allah, pardon my insincerity by virtue of what I preached to Thy creation". The Sheikh went on repeating the same words till he breathed his last. May Allah, in His Infinite Mercy, shower His blessings on all of them. (*Ithaaf*)

How fortunate were these pious beings who experienced death in such circumstances! May Allah, in His Infinite Bounty, grant something of the benedictions associated with their persons to the

present author, who believes himself to be the most insignificant of His men. Verily, Allah is the Most Bountiful; His Bounty transcends everything.

② عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ جَاءَ رَجُلٌ فَقَعَدَ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ لِي مَمْلُوكِينَ يَكْذِبُونَنِي وَيَخُونُونَنِي وَيَعْصُونََنِي وَأَشْتَهُهُمْ وَأَضْرِبُهُمْ فَكَيْفَ أَنَا مِنْهُمْ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُحَسَّبُ مَا خَانُواكَ وَعَصَوْكَ وَكَذَّبُواكَ وَعِقَابُكَ أَيَا هُمْ فَإِنْ كَانَ عِقَابُكَ أَيَا هُمْ بِقَدْرِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ كَانَ ذَلِكَ كِفَاً لَكَ وَلَا عَلَيْكَ فَإِنْ كَانَ عِقَابُكَ أَيَا هُمْ دُونَ ذُنُوبِهِمْ كَانَ فَضْلاً لَكَ وَإِنْ كَانَ عِقَابُكَ أَيَا هُمْ فَوْقَ ذُنُوبِهِمْ أَقْتَصَرَ لِمُؤْمِنِكَ الْفَضْلُ فَتَنَحَّى الرَّجُلُ وَجَعَلَ يُلَهِّفُ وَيَبْكِي فَقَالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَمَا تَقْرَأُ قَوْلَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئاً وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَنْتَ بِهَا وَكَفَى بِهَا حَاسِبِينَ ○ فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا أَجِدُ لِي وَلِلْهَوْلِ شَيْئاً خِيراً مِنْ مَفَارِقَتِهِمْ أَشْهَدُكَ أَنَّهُمْ كُلُّهُمْ أَحْرَارٌ رَوَاهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ كَذَا فِي الْمَشْكُوتِ

## HADITH: 20

Aishah Radhiallaho anha narrates that a person once came and sat down in front of Rasulallah Sallallah alaihe wasallam. He then said, "O Rasulallah, I have many slaves who tell lies to me, cheat me and disobey me, and I scold them and beat them. How shall I be treated with regard to them on the Day of Resurrection?" Rasulallah Sallallah alaihe wasallam replied, "On the Day of Resurrection, their offences, of disobedience, deceit and lying to you, shall be weighed in the Balance (for, on that Day, everything, whether it is something possessing a physical existence or otherwise, shall be weighed in the Balance) and the retribution determined according to their

offences. If your punishment for them would equal their offence in weight, you will be on even terms; if your punishment weighed less than the offences, the difference will be added to your credit. But if your punishment of them be more than they deserved, you shall have to pay for the excess." The man went aside, wailing and weeping with sorrow. Rasulallah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam then said, "Do you not recite this Ayat in the Holy Qur'an?"

And We shall set a just Balance for the Day of Resurrection, so that no soul is wronged in aught. Though it be of the weight of a grain of mustard-seed, We shall bring it; And We suffice for reckoners. (al-Ambiya: 47)

The man said, "O Rasulallah, I can think of nothing better, both for myself and my slaves, than to separate from them; I call upon you to bear witness that they are all free".

*Note:*

'Facing the Reckoning on the Day of Judgment will be a great ordeal and there are frequent references to it, in the Holy Qur'an and Ahadith, giving details of how the Reckoning will be made and forewarning men against its severity. We quote below a few Ayaat and Ahadith, by way of illustration:-

① وَالْقَوَايِمُ مَا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ تُخْرَجُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

1. 'And guard yourself against a Day in which you will be brought back to Allah. Then every soul will be paid in full that which it has earned, and they will not be wronged.' (al-Baqarah: 281)

② يَوْمَ يُجَدُّ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُخَضَّرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

2. 'On the Day when every soul will find itself confronted with all that it has done of good, and all that it has done of evil; (every soul) will long that there might be a mighty chasm (distance) between it (the soul) and that (evil). Allah biddeth you to beware of Him. And Allah is full of pity for (His) bondsmen' (Aal-e-Imraan: 30)



(Out of consideration for you, He forewarns you againsts His punishment, lest you should have to suffer it).

③ وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

3. 'Whoso deceiveth will bring his deceit with him on the Day of Judgement. Then every soul will be paid in full what it has earned; and they will not be wronged'. (al-e-Imraan: 161)

④ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّقُونَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ

4. 'Every soul will taste of death. And you will be paid, on the Day of Resurrection, only that which you have fairly earned (good or bad)'. (Aal-e-Imraan: 185)

⑤ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

5. 'Lo! Allah is swift to take account.'

This Ayat is frequently repeated in the Holy Qur'an. It means that everybody will soon be taken to account and recompensed in full for his deeds.

⑥ وَالْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝ وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَظْلِمُونَ

6. 'The weighing, on that Day, (of deeds) is a reality. As for those whose scale is heavy (with good deeds), they will be successful. And as for those whose scale is light, those are they who will lose their souls because they did not pay the attention that was due to our revelations' (al-A'raf: 8-9)

⑦ إِن رُّسُلَنَا يُكْتَتِبُونَ مَا تَكْمُرُونَ

7. 'Lo! Our messengers (angels) write down all the evils) that you plot'. (Yurus: 21)

(And then retribution will be enforced on you for all your misdeeds on the Day of Resurrection, when your book of deeds is placed before you).

⑧ وَالَّذِينَ كَسَبُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ جَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ بِمِثْلِهَا وَتَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ ۚ مَا لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ

8. 'And those who earn ill deeds, (for them) there is requital of each ill deed by the like thereof; and disgrace will overtake them--

*They have no protector from Allah, (their faces will be so dark) as if they had been covered with a cloak of darkest night'. (Yunus: 27)*

هَذَاكَ تَبْلُوا كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا سَلَفَتْ

⑨

9. 'There shall every soul experience (or, discern) that which it has done aforetime (in the world i.e. will know whether his deeds were good or bad), and will be taken to account'. (Yunus: 30)

لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ الْخَيْرُ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُ لَوْ أَنَّ لِلَّذِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَافْتَدَوْا بِهِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ نُزُولُ الْحِسَابِ

10. 'For those who answered Allah's call (obeyed Him) is bliss (a good recompense); and for those who did not answer His call, even if they had all that is in the earth, and therewith the like thereof, they would proffer it as ransom. Such will have a woeful Reckoning' (ar-Ra'd:18)

فَرَأَيْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاءَ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ

⑪

11. 'Thine (responsibility) is, (O Muhammad) but conveyance (of the message); Ours the Reckoning' (ar-Ra'd: 40)

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

⑫

12. 'Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents and believers (Mo'mineen) on the Day when the Reckoning is established.'. (Ibrahim: 41)

This was the invocation to Allah Ta'ala by Ibrahim (Alaihissallam)

وَنَرَى السَّجُودِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقَرَّنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ سُرَابِطُهُمْ مِنْ قِطْرَانٍ وَتَغْشَى وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ لِيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

13. 'You will see the guilty on that Day, linked together in chains, their raiments will be made from pitch (highly inflammable resin of pines) and Fire will be covering their faces, so that Allah may repay each soul what it has earned. Lo! Allah is swift at reckoning'. (Ibrahim: 49-51)

﴿١٣﴾ وَكُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ أَلْفُ نَفْسٍ عَلَيْهِ وَثِقَةٌ لَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ كِتَابٌ يَلْقَاهُ مَنْشُورًا ﴿١٤﴾  
اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٥﴾

14. 'And every man's augury (good or bad deeds) have We fastened to his own neck, and We shall spread forth for him, on the Day of Resurrection, the book of his deeds wide open. (And it will be said unto him): Read your book, your soul suffices as reckoner against you this day'. (Make your reckoning for yourself; you need not be reckoned by anybody else). (Bani Israel: 13-14)

﴿١٥﴾ كَلَّا سَتَكُنُّ مَأْتُولٌ نَّوْدَلُهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مُدًّا ﴿١٦﴾

15. 'Nay (it is not as the Kaafirs think), but We record that which anyone says (and We shall produce before him his book of deeds, on the Day of Resurrection ).' (Mariam: 79)

﴿١٦﴾ اقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

16. 'Their Reckoning draweth near for mankind, while they are heedless and turn away (from preparation for it).' (al-Ambiya: 1)

﴿١٨﴾ فَإِذَا انْفُخَتِ الصُّورُ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ﴿٢٠﴾ قَالَ ذَاكَ هُوَ الْمُقْتَدِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ﴿٢٢﴾ قَالَ لَهُمُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَأُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَيْرًا أَنْفُسُهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَلْتَارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

17. 'And when the Trumpet (Soor) is blown (on the Day of Resurrection, people will be in great terror) so that there will be no kinship among them (they will become strangers to one another in the stupor of terror, as an Ayat says 'in another context: 'On the Day when a man flees from his brother'....) nor will they ask of one another. (And the balance will be raised for them). Then those whose scales (of good deeds) are heavy, they are the successful. And those whose scales are light, those are who will lose their souls, in hell abiding. The Fire will burn their faces, which will become distorted.' (al-Mo'minun: 101-104)

﴿١٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ الظَّمَانُ مَاءً حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ مَاءً وَوَجَدَ لَهُ نَارًا قَوْفًا خَالِدًا فِيهِ وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٩﴾

18. 'Those who disbelieve (are away from the light of true Guidance or Noor of Hidayat), their deeds are as a mirage in a desert: the thirsty one supposes it to be water (from distance), till he comes unto it and finds it to be nothing and finds in place thereof,



Allah, Who pays him his account. And Allah is swift to take account.' (an-Nur: 39)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا نَسُوا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ ۝

(١٩)

19. 'Lo! Those who wander (astray) from the path of Allah will have an awful doom, for as much as they forgot the Day of Reckoning.' (Saad: 26)

الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ لَا ظُلْمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ۝

(٢٠)

20. 'This Day (the Day of Resurrection) shall each soul be requited that which it has earned; no wrong (will be done on) this Day. Lo! Allah is swift at reckoning.' (al-Mo'min: 17)

وَنَرَىٰ كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ جَاثِيَةً ۚ كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ تُدْعَىٰ إِلَىٰ كِتَابِهَا الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝ فَمَذَاجُهَا يُطَبَّقُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالنِّبَةِ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنبِذُ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

(٢١)

21. 'And (on the Day of Resurrection) you will see each nation crouching (on their knees, in terror), each nation summoned to its Record (of deeds). (And it will be said unto them): This Day you will be requited what you used to do. Our Book (in which your deeds are recorded) pronounces against you with truth. Lo! We have caused (all) that you did to be recorded (by the angels and this is now before you)' (al-Jaathiah: 28-29)

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّينَ مِنَ الْمَلَكِ ۚ وَغَيْنَ الشِّمَالِ كَتِيبٌ ۝ مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ۝

(٢٢)

22. 'When the two Recorders (the angels, who make a ready record of everything said or done, record his doings), seated on the right hand and on the left. He utters no word but there is with him an observer ready (who makes a record of what he says; this is the Record of deeds)' (Qaaf: 17-18)

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَىٰ مِنْكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ ۝ فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَدَّىٰ كِتَابَهُ يُعِيبُهُ ۚ يَقُولُ مَا ذُمْ لِقَوْمِي ۚ كِتَابُهُ ۝ إِنَّ ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلْكٌ مُسَائِيَةٌ ۝ فَهَوِّنِي عِيشَةً رَاضِيَةً ۝ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ۝ تَطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ ۝ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ ۝ .....

(٢٣)

23. 'The Day that you are brought (before Allah for Reckoning), not a secret of yours will be hidden. (Your Record will be given in



إِن إِلَيْنَا أِيَابُهُمْ ثُمَّ لَعَنَ مَلِكًا حَمِيمًا

(٢٦)

26. 'Lo! unto Us is their return; and (when it will be) for Us to call them to account? (al-Ghashiya: 25-26)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(٢٧) إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا يَوْمَئِذٍ تُخْبِتُ أَعْيَانَهَا يَا أُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ يَوْمَئِذٍ يُصْعَقُونَ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لَّيُرَوُا أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

27. When the earth is shaken to her (utmost) convulsion (how tremendous will the convulsion be when the entire earth is shaken in a sudden earthquake); and the earth throws up her burdens (hidden treasures and dead bodies); and man cries out (in bewilderment), 'what is the matter with it?' On that day shall it relate its chronicles (the accounts of good or bad deeds committed on the earth's surface). For (on that Day), thy Lord will have given it inspiration. On that Day, will men proceed in scattered companies to be shown their deeds (there will be companies of those 'near to Allah', companies of the pious ones and the companies of those condemned to go to Jahannam; each company will be sub-divided into various sections; there will be groups of the riders, groups of the pedestrians and the groups of those being dragged to Jahannam, on their faces, etc). Then anyone who has done an atom's weight of good (in the world) shall see it; and anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it.' (al-Zilzal, 1 - 8)

The above mentioned twenty seven Verses, about Reckoning and the compensation of deeds, have been given here as a sample. There are hundreds of other Verses which treat this and similar subjects in different ways. Similarly, there are thousands of Ahadith, too numerous for the scope of this book, about the severity of the Day of Reckoning. It is, therefore, imperative that we should spend part of our time (being wasted in earning worldly benefits) in deeds that will be useful for us in our eternal life. It is not too late, and we can do something before the time comes when we can only feel remorse.



**Some Ahadith:**

At this point, we shall recount a few Ahadith on these subjects:

Once, Aishah *Radhiallaho anha* thought of Jahannam and began to weep. When Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* asked her about it, she replied, "My thought of Jahannam has moved me to tears. Will you ever think of your family members on that Day?" Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* replied, "There are three occasions at which no one will think of others: (1) when the Balance is setup, till one knows whether the weight of one's good deeds is light or heavy; (ii) when the Book of deeds is handed to everybody, until he knows whether his Book of deeds comes into his right hand, or the left behind his back; (iii) and when Bridge of Siraat (the Pathway) is laid across Jahannam (and he is commanded to go across it), till he goes across successfully." (*Mishkaat*)

Ibne Abbas *Radhiallallo anho* says, "Men will face a reckoning of deeds on the Day of Resurrection: he whose virtues exceed his evil deeds (even by a single act of goodness) will go to Jannah; and he whose evil deeds exceed his virtues (by a single misdeed) will go to Jahannam". He then recited the Verse, '*As for those whose Scale is heavy*' (given at No:VI above) and added, "The Scale will become heavy even with the addition of an atom's weight of virtue. He whose virtues are equal to his evil deeds, will go to the 'A'raaf' (the interspace between Jannah and Jahannam)."

Ali *Radhiallaho anho* says: "The scale (of virtues) of a person whose outer behaviour is better than his inner nature, will be lighter than the scale of a person whose inner self is better than his outer behaviour". Anas *Radhiallaho anho* narrates that Rasulullah *Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* said, "An angel will be deputed at the scale who, when he finds a person's scale (of virtues) to be heavy, will announce in a voice loud enough to be heard by all the creatures, 'So-and-so, son of so-and-so, has been blessed with eternal success, after which there is no misfortune'. And if the angel finds someone's Scale (of virtues) to be light, he will likewise proclaim him to be a wretched person, condemned to eternal misery." There are many Ahadith which relate to weighing of deeds. One relates that, "So huge will be the Balance that each of its scales will be vast enough to contain the heavens and the earth and all that is there between them."

Jaabir *Radhiallaho anho* narrates that *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "The first thing to be put in the scale (of virtues) will be the expenditure of a man on his family." *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* once said to Abu Zarr, "Let me tell you about two virtues which are easy to perform, but very heavy in the scale (of good deeds). They are: (i) good habits, and (ii) observing silence (i.e. not indulging in loose talk)." A Hadith says: "There are two expressions, which are very dear to Allah *Ta'ala*, very light on the tongue but very heavy on the scale. They are:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ

"Glory be to Allah! All praise be to Him. Glory be to Allah, Who is Incomparably Great!"

According to another Hadith, *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* said, "If anyone fulfils the need of one of his Muslim brothers, I shall stand by his side at the Scale (on the Day of Resurrection). If his virtues exceed his sins, well and good; if not, I shall intercede with Allah *Ta'ala* for him." Another Hadith says: "The ink of the Ulama and the blood of the martyrs will also be weighed on the Day of Resurrection and the ink will out-weigh the blood." *Eesaa (Jesus) Alaihissalaam* has said, "The virtues of the Ummah of Muhammad *Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* will be far heavier in the Scale than those of other people, because their tongues will be well accustomed to the recitation of the Kalimah, "Laa-ilaha-illallah." Abu Dardaa *Radhiallaho anho* says, "The scale (of virtues) of a person, who all the time thinks of his stomach (food and drinks) and sex, will be light." (*Durre Manthur*)

Another Hadith reports *Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam* as saying: "The angel who records the virtues of a person on his right hand side, and is the 'Ameer' (commander) of the angel who records his evil deeds, and is on his left hand side. When the man performs an act of virtue, the angel on the right instantly records it with tenfold reward thereof, but when the man commits a sin, the angel on the left, being a subordinate, seeks permission of his 'Ameer', before recording it (in the Book). The angel on the right says to him: "Wait for six or seven hours". So, if the man repents of his sin during this time, the 'Ameer' does not allow the other angel to record it. But if the man does not repent, the angel on the left side makes a record of it." (*Durre Manthur*)

A number of Ahadith relate that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Mankind will face reckoning three times, on the Day of Resurrection. At the first two reckonings, they will be asked to render an account of certain things, they will answer questions and offer excuses etc., but at the third, the Book of their deeds will be given into their hands, some receiving them in their right hands and others, in their left." (*Durre Manthur*). It has been narrated in another Hadith that Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "Whoever possesses three qualities, Allah Ta'ala will subject him to an easy reckoning, and bless him with entry into Jannah through His mercy: (i) that you should show favour to him who is unkind to you; (ii) that you should join kinship with him who severs relations with you; and (iii) that you should forgive him who wrongs you." (*Durre Manthur*)

Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has said, "If you knew what I know of the circumstances of the Hereafter, you would laugh little (out of fear) and cry a lot, and not take delight in women in bed, but would take to the jungle crying (unto Allah)". When Abu Zarr Radhiallaho anho heard this, he said, "I wish I were a tree to be cut down! (i.e. I wish that I were not a human being and, thus, would escape such trials). Another Hadith reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "On the Day of Resurrection, a (dead) man will rise from his grave in the same condition in which he died." (In whatever action, good or bad, a man is engaged at the time of his death, he will be in the same state when he rises from his grave on the Day of Resurrection). (*Mishkaat*) Once Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam delivered a sermon, in the course of which he said, "Listen carefully; this world is just a temporary benefit, of which everybody, the righteous and the wicked, take their share (taking greater benefits does not indicate a man's righteousness). The Akhirah is a definite event whose occurrence at a definite time is certain and in which a King Who is All-Powerful will pass Judgment, Infinite are His Powers. All that is good is there in Jannah, in its entirety; man should do whatever good he can, for it leads to Jannah. And evil in its entirety is in Jahannam; one should, therefore, avoid the least bit of evil, and should not take it lightly, as it may lead one to Jahannam. Be very particular about performing good deeds, for you stand in great danger of displeasing your Lord (you should ever be mindful of incurring the displeasure of Allah Ta'ala and should have due fear of Him). Bear in mind that you will be confronted with your deeds (and you will have to account for



them). He who does an atom's weight of good will see it, and he who does an atom's weight of evil will also see it." (*Mishkaat*).

*Ali Radhiallaho anho* says: "Everyday the world is turning away, i.e. getting farther, and Akhirah is coming nearer and both of them (the world and the Akhirah) have their devotees (adherents). So, do not be a seeker of the world, rather be a seeker of the Hereafter, for, the present is the time for deeds and not for rendering an account, but tomorrow is the time for rendering an account and not for deed." (*Mishkaat*)

*Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* has said, "There will be three courts on the Day of Judgement: In one there is no pardon at all. This court will be held for cases of associating partners to Allah *Ta'ala* (i.e. in this court, a verdict will be given regarding Imaan (faith) or Kufr (dis-belief) of a person; and for 'Kufr' there is no pardon.)-In the other court, the persons who had wronged others will have to compensate them as a matter of due right. (Either a compensation will be taken from the wrong-doer or Allah *Ta'ala* will grant the wronged one a recompense from His Own Treasury). There will be a third court, which will decide the cases of Allah's rights over His creatures (i.e. what is obligatory for men to their Lord, like *Faraaidh*, etc.). In this court, Allah *Ta'ala* may be a bit lenient to the wrong doers; for this is a matter between them and their Lord; it is His discretion. If He wishes, He may demand His rights, or He may grant them a pardon." (*Mishkaat*)

Another Hadith reports *Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam* as saying: "He who has violated the honour, or harmed the property (of a brother Muslim) should better seek forgiveness from the aggrieved today; for a time is soon coming when he will have neither Dinaar nor Dirham (and, on that Day, all reckoning will be made in terms of virtues and sins). If a wrong-doer is found to possess some virtues, a proportionate amount of these will be taken away from him and given to the wronged person as a compensation; but if he is found to possess no virtues, a proportionate amount of the wronged person's evil deeds will be added to the account of the wrong-doer." Thus, the wrong-doer may have to remain in Jahannam for a longer time, for he will also have to do penance for the sins of the wronged person. (*Mishkaat*)

Another Hadith says: "On the Day of Resurrection, the due rights will have to be paid to those to whom they are owed. So much so that the hornless goat will be avenged from a horned goat." (*Mishkaat*). Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "Do you know the truly destitute." The Sahabah Radhiallaho anhum replied, "To us, he is the one who has neither Dirham nor property". Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam said, "The destitute among my Ummah is he who will come, on the Day of Resurrection, with abundant virtues like Salaat, Fasting and Zakaat, but he will have abused some one, put a false blame on another, forcibly taken the money of another person or killed or beaten another. Then, some of his good deeds will be given to the aggrieved persons. Now, if his stock of virtues is exhausted before he has settled all the claims, a proportionate amount of his evil deeds will be taken from him and added to his account and the man will thus be cast into Jahan-nam, notwithstanding his abundant virtues, to do penance for the wrongs done to others." (*Mishkaat*).

Faqih Abul Laith Rahmatullah alaihe says: "On the Day of Resurrection, when people rise from their graves, they will keep standing, waiting for seventy years, but no one will pay heed to them. They will weep bitterly, till their eyes become dry and drops of blood begin to drip from their eyes. Then they will be summoned to the Doomsday audience (Hashr) and the angels will begin to descend from the heavens: angels from each heaven will stand round the plain in a separate circle, one (circle) after the other". The Holy Qur'an describes this scene of the Assembly in the following Verses:

وَيَوْمَ تَشْقَى السَّمَاءُ بِالسَّاعِرِ وَيُنْزَلُ الْمَلَكُ تَنْزِيلًا ۝ أَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْغَنِيُّ ۝ وَكَانَ يَوْمًا  
عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا ۝ وَيَوْمَ يَعْصِي الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَلَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ۝  
يَوْمَئِذٍ لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَكُنْ مِنْ مَنَّا خَلِيلًا ۝ لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي ۝ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ  
خَذُولًا ۝

A Day when the heavens with the clouds will be rent asunder and the angels will be sent down, a grand descent. The Sovereignty on that Day will be the true Sovereignty belonging to the Beneficent One (ar-Rahman) (i.e. nobody will have any say in the matters regarding the Reckoning, rewards or punishment of deeds). And it will be a hard Day for the Kaafirs. On the Day when the wrong-doer will gnaw his hands, he will say: "Ah, would that I had chosen a way shown by the Rasul of Allah. Alas for me! Ah, that I had never taken such a one for friend! He verily led me astray from the Reminder

(from following the good counsel) after it had reached me. Truly, Shaitan was ever man's deserter in the very hour of need." (al-Furqaan: 25-29)

(A detailed account of how Shaitaan deserts a person at the hour of need occurs in Surrah Ibrahim.) According to another Hadith, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam once said, "At that time when people assemble on the Day of Resurrection, Allah Ta'ala will address the gathering of Jinn and men, telling them of His commandments and admonitions for life in the world and the entry of their actions in the Book of deeds, and further inform them that if they find virtues recorded in their Book they should be thankful to Allah Ta'ala; and those who do not find virtues recorded in their Book should blame none but themselves (for not heeding His commandments)". Allah Ta'ala will then command Jahannam so that its punishment will be made visible to the people, on seeing which everybody will fall on his knees. Allah Ta'ala says regarding this:

وَيَوْمَ تَدْعُ أُمَمًا إِلَىٰ جَمَلٍ لَا يُخْلَصُ مِنْهُ شَيْءٌ ذَلُوكَانَ ذَاقَرُونَ

And thou will see every nation crouching, each nation summoned to its record (of deeds) (al-Jathiya: 28)

Then Allah Ta'ala will start adjudicating between men, and even the case of the animals will be taken up. A horned goat will be required to compensate the hornless goat, whereafter the animals will be commanded to turn into dust. At that time, the non-believers will crave for death, saying:

يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ تُرَابًا

'Would that I were (also changed to) dust.' (an-Naba: 40)

Another Hadith reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying: "Mankind will be assembled on the Day of Resurrection, naked as they were at birth. Aisha Radhiallaho anha asked, "When people will be naked and looking at one another, would they not feel ashamed of themselves. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam replied, "Their suffering on that Day will be far too severe for them to think of looking at one another; their eyes will be fixed on the heavens above and everybody will perspire according to his evil deeds, the sweat reaching the feet of some, the belly of others, while



still others will have their sweat covering even their mouths. The angels will stand encircling the 'Arsh' (Throne) of Allah Ta'ala. Then a person's name will be called out, whereupon he will come out of the multitude and will be made to stand in front of Allah Ta'ala and a proclamation shall be made: 'Let those who have any claims upon this man come forward.' Then those who have claims against him, or have been wronged by him, will be called forth, one after the other, and his virtues will be given to them in compensation for what he owed them. If his good deeds are exhausted before he repays what he owes them, some of their sins will be put in his record. After he has been laden with their sins, together with his own, he will be commanded to go into 'Haviyah' i.e. the hungry raging fire of Jahannam (as mentioned in Surah al-Qaari'ah). Seeing this strictness in reckoning and the severity of punishment, every Nabi and every angel, however intimate he may be with Allah, will feel afraid on his own account, except those whom Allah Ta'ala has protected from all such fears, as a special favour. At this hour, everybody will be questioned about four things: how did he spend his life? how did he use his body? What he did regarding the knowledge that he possessed? How he acquired his property and on what he spent it? (A detailed account of this questioning has been given under Hadith No: VI, in the same Chapter.).

Ikramah Radhiallaho anho says, "On that Day, a father will say to his son, 'I am your father; and the son will acknowledge his favours to him, but when the father will ask him to give him one virtue, be it an atom's weight, so that his scale (of virtues) might possibly tilt the balance, the son will reply, "I am myself in a dangerous situation. I do not know what might happen to me, so I cannot afford to part with a single act of virtue'. The man will then go to his wife, remind her of his relationship with her and of the favours he has been doing her, but she will also refuse to oblige him. In short, he will go to everyone, asking for a virtue." The Holy Qur'an describes this scene in the following verse:

وَلَا يَزِدُّهُمْ إِزْرًا وَإِذْ أَخْرَىٰ وَلِيْن تَدْعُ مُثْقَلَةٌ إِلَىٰ جَيْهَاتٍ لَا يَحْسِلُ مِنْهُ شَيْءٌ وَلَوْ كَانَ قَاْرِبِيْن

*And no burdened soul can bear another's burden (of sins) and, if one heavily laden cries (for help) with his load (of sins), nothing of it will be lifted even though he (unto whom he cries) be of kin (i.e. he will not help his relatives). (Tanbeh-ul-Ghafileen)*

The version of 'Durre Manthur' describes the same spectacle more explicitly: A father will say to his son, "How did I treat you in the world?" And the son will praise his kind behaviour towards him. The father will then ask him for one act of virtue and say, "I hope that it might be of help to me." The son will say to him, "Dear father, you have asked for a trifle, but I am helpless, for I am in an equally dangerous situation." The man will then go to his wife and ask her for help, but she will similarly refuse to oblige him, as mentioned in the Verses

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ وَالْخُشُوعَ يَوْمًا لَا يَجْزِي وَالِدٌ عَنْ وَلَدِهِ وَلَا مَوْلَاٌ ذُو جَانٍ عَنْ وَالِدِهِ شَيْئًا إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْغُرُورُ ۝

O mankind! Keep your duty to your Lord and fear a Day when the parent will not be able to avail the child in aught, nor the child to avail the parent. Lo! Allah's promise is the very truth. (The Day is bound to come). Let not the life of the world beguile you (lest you should be too engrossed in the life of the world to keep the Hereafter in mind), nor let the deceiver (Shaitan) beguile you, with regard to Allah (let not the Shaitan lead you astray and make you forgetful of that Day). (Luqman: 33)

وَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الضَّاخَةُ ۝ يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ ۝ وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبْنَاهُ وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ ۝ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ ۝

But when the (deafening) Shout comes (i.e. the Day of Resurrection), On the Day when a man flees from his brother and his mother and his father and his wife and his children. (No one shall be able to help anybody else). Every man that Day shall have concern enough to make him heedless (of others). ('Abasa: 33-37)

Qataadah Rahmatullah alaihe commenting on these Verses says, "On the Day of Resurrection, nobody would like to come across any one of his kin or any person acquainted with him, for fear, lest he should demand something from him" (Durre Manthur). This subject forms the content of many Verses of the Holy Qur'an. It occurs so, in Surah al-Baqarah:

وَالْقَوَا يُعَمَّا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ۝

"And guard yourselves against the Day when no soul will in aught avail another (for example, the Salaat performed by one man

*will not be accepted on behalf of another person), nor will intercession be accepted from it, nor will compensation (in terms of money) be received from it, nor will they be helped. (It will not be possible for anyone to avert their punishment by use of force). "(al-Baqarah: 48)*

In this Verse, Allah Ta'ala, after recounting the various ways in which people help one another, has warned us that, in no way will anybody be able to help anyone else. There are four ways of helping a person:

1. A powerful person may intervene and thus, avert the punishment by use of force; this may be termed as 'Nusrat'. Allah Ta'ala has ruled out any such possibility.
2. A man may avert the punishment of another person, even without the use of force, in two ways:

- (a) Without paying any compensation i.e. through intercession;
- (b) By paying compensation, which, again, can be of two kinds viz. (i) physical compensation, or (ii) material compensation.

The Verse rejects all these possible ways of helping one another. Similarly, the same subject has been treated in many other Verses of the Holy Qur'an with slight variations.

In this connection, it should be borne in mind that the sinners, among the Muslims, would not be treated at par with the non-believers. The Ulama are agreed that the non-believers cannot escape their punishment even though a Nabi, saint or angel (however close he may be to Allah Ta'ala) should intercede for them. As for the case of sinners among the Muslims, the above mentioned Verses and Ahadith indicate that, after a specific time on the Day of Reckoning, the pious men, Ambiya and others, will be allowed to intercede for them. Many Verses of the Holy Qur'an testify to the truth of this statement. For example, it occurs so in Surah Taa Haa. 109):

يَوْمَئِذٍ لَا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَاعَةُ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ

*"On that Day no intercession shall avail, save (that of) him unto whom (i.e. a Nabi or a saint ) the Beneficent has given leave (in favour of a person) for whom He is pleased to accept (intercession)".*



But it is worthy of note that nobody knows, for certain, whether or not Allah Ta'ala will allow His pious men to intercede for him on the Day of Resurrection. One should, of course, entertain good expectations of the Bounty of Allah Ta'ala, but no one can be sure of being forgiven through the intercession of the pious beings. We should, therefore, be fearful of the Day of Resurrection, which is the severest Day; and try to protect ourselves against its severities, which can only be done now, in the present time. Giving Sadaqah, plentifully, is very beneficial for protection against the severity of that Day. We have quoted a large number of Verses and Ahadith, on this subject, in Chapter One of this book. There is a well-known Hadith which reports Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam as saying, "Guard yourselves against the Fire of Jahannam, even though it be with half a date (given as Sadaqah)" and again, "Sadaqah finishes sins, as water extinguishes fire;" so also, "On the Day of Resurrection a person shall be in the shade of his Sadaqah." (*Ithaaf*)

The Hadith means that, on that Day, when the intensity of heat will cause a person to sweat profusely, the perspiration reaching even up to their mouths, people will be in the shade of their Sadaqah, the coolness of the shade being in accordance with the extent of his Sadaqah; the greater the amount of Sadaqah, the cooler and the more pleasant will be the shade. Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihe wasallam has also said, "Sadaqah appeases the wrath of Allah Ta'ala and also averts a bad end". (*Mishkaat*). Luqman advised his son, "Whenever you happen to commit a sin, give something away as Sadaqah". We have already narrated the story of an unchaste woman who was granted forgiveness for giving some water to a thirsty dog (*Chapter 1 - Hadith: 10*)

Ubaid bin Umair Rahmatullah alaihe says: "On the Day of Resurrection, mankind will be assembled in utter hunger, parched with thirst and stark naked. Then Allah Ta'ala will feed one who has fed someone for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala; and give a drink to him who has given a drink to someone for pleasure of Allah Ta'ala; and clothe one who has clothed someone, for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala." (*Ihya*). We have already quoted a Tradition in Chapter one, under Hadith Eleven, to the following effect, "On the Day of Resurrection, the dwellers of Jahannam will be drawn up in a row line and when one of the pious and perfect Muslims passes by them, one of the Jahannamis will ask the pious man to intercede for him

with Allah Ta'ala. The man will ask him who he is, and he will reply, 'Do you not recognise me? I am one who gave you a drink on such and such day.' Another Hadith mentions that 'On the Day of Resurrection when the Jannatis (dwellers of Jannah) and the Jahannamis (the dwellers of Jahannam) will be drawn up in two separate rows (lines), a man among the Jahannamis will happen to see a person standing in the rows of the Jannatis and remind him of a favour he had done him in the world. The Jannati will catch him by the hand and take him to the presence of Allah Ta'ala, and say, 'O Allah, this man did me such and such favour in the world,' and Allah Ta'ala will grant him forgiveness, in His Infinite Mercy.'

Another Hadith indicates thus: 'On the Day of Resurrection, an announcement will be made: 'Where are the poor among the Ummah of Muhammad? Rise, go about in the Assembly (*Maidan-e-Hashr*) and look for those who have given you a morsel of food or some drink or a piece of new or worn-out cloth for my pleasure. Hold all such people by the hand and bring them into Jannah'. At this, the poor ones among this Ummah will rise, go about the plain, search out all such people and bring them into Jannah'. Another Hadith has it to the following effect: On the Day of Resurrection, someone will make an announcement, 'Where are those who honoured the poor and the humble ones? Let them go to Jannah this Day, without fear or grieving any more.' We have mentioned another Tradition under Hadith Thirteen in the same Chapter which is as follows: 'If anyone removes a brother Muslim's hardship, Allah Ta'ala will remove, from him, one of his hardship on the Day of Resurrection; and if anybody covers up a brother Muslim's shortcoming, Allah Ta'ala will cover up his shortcomings, on the Day of Resurrection.' And, under Hadith Fourteen, we have quoted the following Tradition: 'He who helps one who is in distress will be firm and steadfast on a Day when, even, the mountains will be shaken to their very foundation'. We also quoted the following Verse at No. Thirty four in Chapter One:

إِنَّ الْإِبْرَکَیْرَیْنَ مِنْ کَاسٍ کَانَ مَرَّجُهَا کَالْقُرْأَنِ حَیْثُ کَرَّبَ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ یَجْرُونَهَا الْخَبِیْرَ  
 یَوْمَئِذٍ یُغْذَوْنَ مِنْ شَیْءٍ مَکَانَ شَیْءٍ مُسْتَطِیْرًا ۖ وَیُطْعَمُونَ الْقَعَمَ عَلَى حَبِّهِ وَنَکِیْنًا وَنَیْمًا وَآسِیْرًا  
 إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ لَیَجْعَلُوهُ لَآئِبًا یُرِیدُ مِنْهُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا یُکْوَرُ ۖ إِنْ تَخَافُ مِنْ نَبَا یَوْمَ عَظِیْمٍ ۖ فَوَقِّمْ  
 اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَٰلِكَ الْیَوْمِ وَلَهُمْ نَقَصٌ وَسُرُورٌ ۝



*"And (they ) feed the needy one, the orphan and the prisoner (among the Kaafirs), for the love of Him (Allah Ta'ala), (saying), "We feed you for the sake of (Allah only. We wish for no reward, nor thanks from you. Lo! We fear from our Lord a Day of frowning and of wrath. Therefore, Allah has warded off from them the evil of that Day and has made them find brightness (of face) and joy." (ad-Dahr, 8, 9, 10,11)*

To conclude, we have discussed the subject in detail in Chapter One (Volume one) of this book, viz. that Sadaqah, when it is given in large quantities and frequently, proves to be very beneficial for protection against the severities of the Day of Resurrection. In this Verse, Allah Ta'ala has promised protection to those who give away Sadaqah for the love of Him. What can be more reassuring than a promise from Allah Ta'ala?





